

TAMIL CIVILIZATION

N.Nandhivarman

General Secretary Dravida Peravai

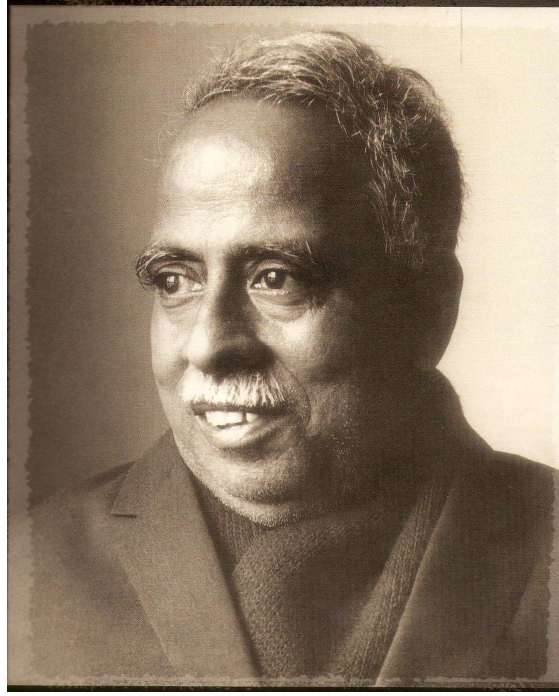
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Dedicating to the memory of my mentor Aringnar Anna....

Thanking the Management of New Indian Express which allowed me to write for 52 weeks in the Puducherry Edition of its Week End pages, I have attempted to compile these articles on Tamil culture, history, literature, music, and personalities in the field of arts. All these articles came to public light through New Indian Express.

The Puducherry Government organization Puducherry Institute of Linguistics and Culture organized a National Seminar on Indus Valley Civilization, and my paper which appeared in the PILC Journal of Dravidic Studies, is also in this book. The paper on Nagaland meant for a book planned by Voice of Voiceless e-magazine of Canada, but did not see the print too finds place here.

Hope that readers will have a birds eye view on Tamil culture and civilization.....

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INDUS VALLEY: CRADLE OR CATACOMB OF DRAVIDIAN CIVILIZATION ?

N.Nandhivarman General Secretary Dravida Peravai

[Paper presented at the National Seminar on The Indus Valley : A Review of Recent Research organized by the Pondicherry Institute of Linguistics and Culture on 28.9.2003 at the Chief Secretariat Conference Hall and inaugurated by the Pondicherry Education Minister K.Lakshminarayanan and Presided by Dr.Pa.Maruthanayagam, Director of PILC.]

Humanity is engaged in an endless quest to unravel the mysteries of Nature. The origin of the human race, the original homeland of the first human being, the first civilization on earth, the birth of the language and its multiplication and the puzzles of continental drifts, sea floor spreading, etc are some of the fields wherein new evidences are coming out every now and that which makes such a quest towards truth a must for proper construction of the history of the human race. The greatness of the Indus Valley Civilization and various clues that it provides to discover the first civilization on earth needs to be evaluated in the context of changing needs of our times, wherein claims and counter claims or even doctored claims are made to establish the Dravidian or the otherwise content of that civilization.

In India Sir John Marshall deserves the credit to be the first scholar to suggest that the language of the Indus Valley civilization was Dravidian. Piero Meriggi in his book “ Zur Indus Schrift “ (which means On the Indus Script) written in the German language was of the opinion that Brahui, spoken even now in Baluchistan, is the Dravidian Language which must be the original language of the Harappans. Henry Heras in his book “Studies in Proto-Mediterranean Culture “turned more than 1800 Indus texts into Proto-Dravidian sentences. In their book “Proto-Indica: 1979, Report on the investigation of the proto-Indian texts by Yu.V.Knorozov, M.F.Ali Bedil and B.Ya.Volchok have carried out a computer analysis of

sign distribution in the Indus texts and had proven beyond an iota of doubt that it belonged to the Dravidian language family. David W. McAlphin in his book "Proto-Elamo-Dravidian and F.C. Southward in his book "The Reconstruction of Prehistoric South Asia language contact" had successfully used the Dravidian roots to reconstruct the language of the Indus Valley. As Dr. Mathivanan had too proven that the Indus script is Dravidian, there is no necessity to question the collective wisdom of all these scholars, yet there are schools of thought, which want to deny the Dravidian roots of the Indus Valley civilization.

Let me quote elaborately from Professor Irfan Habib, who puts up a strong case for the Dravidian family language. "The Dravidian languages constitute the second largest family in India. Tamil, Malayalam, and Kannada belong to the Southern group, Telugu (in Andhra) and Gondi (in widely scattered pockets of Madhya Pradesh) to the South Central, Kolami (in Maharashtra) to the Central, Kurukh (in Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Nepal) and Brahui (Baluchistan) to the Northern. There are also many minor languages attached to these different groups. Tamil has the longest literary history going back at least to the first century B.C. By comparing the vocabularies and grammar of these languages, a hypothetical Proto-Dravidian language can be reconstructed, which, it is assumed, must have been spoken before the speakers of the Dravidian languages separated from each other. The use of certain retroflex sounds (such as hard l, n, r, rh, the tongue having to curl back just under the hard palate in order to pronounce them) is one of the most common traits in the Dravidian languages, while such retroflexion is absent in both Austro-Asiatic and Indo-European languages spoken outside the Indian sub continent. It is therefore a reasonable conjecture that it is Proto-Dravidian or its early successors, from which the Austro-Asiatic and Indo-Aryan languages derive their retroflex consonants. This inference has many consequences. Retroflexion as well as a few words (more than 2 dozen) of possible Dravidian origin

is present in the Rig-Veda. Since retroflexion is totally absent in the Avesta, the earliest Iranian Text, which is very close to Rigveda in vocabulary and grammar, one must assume that Rigveda reciters introduced retroflexion in pronunciation of even the most impeccable Indo-Iranian words, under the influence of the pronunciation of the speakers of the earlier local languages.

Since the Rig-Veda hymns were composed in the area between the Hindukush and the Ganga, this makes it very likely that some of the substrata languages of Punjab or Upper Indus basin at the time were members of the Dravidian family. The likelihood is increased by the geographical proximity of the Brahui language, whose speakers are today to be found in northeastern Baluchistan, not far from Punjab. Brahui's own case for antiquity has been strengthened by David MacAlphins discovery of the links between Elamite. Similarly connections have been seen between Proto-Dravidian and the Uralic languages of Eastern Europe and Siberia, and this would also suggest that there were once Dravidian speakers in latitudes much further to the north than today. There are strong hints towards linking the official Indus language to the Dravidian family", says Irfan Habib.

Shareen Ratnagar in her book "Understanding Harappa Civilization in the Greater Indus Valley says "Harappan language was probably agglutinative or a language which added suffixes to an unchanging root.

This feature is characteristic of the Dravidian language family than the Indo-Aryan text; the Rig-Veda shows Dravidian influence (indicating that early Indo-Aryans had some contact with Dravidian speakers) make it likely that the language of the Harappans was a Dravidian one. (Note, also, that Brahui, spoken in the hills of southeastern Baluchistan is a Dravidian language)

It will be of great interest to note that Ainul Hag Faridkoti in his book "Urdu zaban ki Qadeem Tareekh

(Urdu: The History of ancient Urdu) and in 'Pre-Aryan origin of Pakistani languages: A monograph' claims that the first languages of the present day Pakistan are Dravidian.

Bertil Tikkanen "On Burushaski and other Ancient substrata in the north western South Asia" asserts that Pakistani languages have a Dravidian substratum. The evidence for the presence of the substratum is the presence of retroflex consonants which do not exist in Iranian or European members of the Indo European family of languages.

Iravatham Mahadevan's book:" The Indus script texts, concordance and tables "helps in deciphering the Indus script, some claim... Sathur Sekaran's valuable contribution in proving that Indus script is Dravidian also deserves special mention. Dr.N.Mahalingam in his article in the book" Ancient India "observes thus: *"though eminent scholars like Heras, Parpola, Kamil Zvelebil, FairServices and Mahadevan have already clearly established that the Indus valley script has to be read only as a Dravidian language, it is the decipherment of the script of the Indus by Dr. M Ramachandran and Dr.R.Madhivanan which is the first cogent and systematic effort which can be stated as the test of vigorous scholarship"*

In another scholarly analysis by M. Sundar Raj in his article Tamil Grammar Rules (Tholkappiam) a new truth emerges. He lists the Gods found in Rig-Veda as 33 gods, and gives a break up. Adityas 12, Vasus 8. Rudras 11, Vasatkara 1, Prajapathi1, so totaling 33. The assertion of Rig-Veda to restrict the number of gods to 33 baffles M.Sundar Raj, which goes into the question of the rationale of this particular scheme of classification. He refers the Tamil Grammar Tholkappiam particularly on alphabets and finds those 33 letters in Tamil script to be the clue for this particular scheme of classification of 33 gods in Rig-Veda. 12 Vowels, 18 consonants, 1 Aidham, 1 Kutrialugaram, 1 Kutrialigaram together makes to the

33 letters. This is a marvelous new line open for research. M.Sundar Raj's views need further deeper consideration. " At first stage of impact between the highly developed Dravidian civilization and the nomadic and vigorous Aryan people, a process of civilization of the latter took place, as elsewhere, leading to the birth of Sanskrit language and the evolution of Sanskrit literary conventions from the Dravidian base. The first result was the comings into being of a mixed language, which we today call Sanskrit. The material for the literary compositions in this language were taken from the culture of the teachers, who obviously were Dravidians, and who found in this process a convenient and secretive way of preserving their culture with a key only known to themselves. These early compositions must have been the work of small groups or schools, working in conclaves independently, but with the same inherited material. Long afterwards an attempt appears to have been made to bring together and systematize the whole material, whence the Vedas, as we know now emerged. But by this time the Dravidian origin of the language and culture was forgotten, not merely due to the lapse of time, but also apparently as an outcome of cultural elimination. Thus the key to the puzzle has remained lost now", opines M.Sundarraaj.

The admixtures and adulterations carried out in the languages of the invaders and the subdued indigenous people need a specialized study to establish the origins of many concepts including the Godhood. An impartial enquiry will bring to light which are the Dravidian or Aryan origins of many social customs, religious practices and literary products including grammar, and unless an unbiased attempt is made in search of truth fabricated truths will rule the roost. It is true that cultural elimination had left a deep adverse impact on the Tamil literary history. The burning away of palm-leaf inscriptions in Bogi fire, and the habit of throwing Tamil texts in Adi-perukku are designed well to serve the process of cultural elimination well,

thereby Tamils lost numerous texts which could have been of greater help in reconstruction of the literary and other history. In this age of Netizens, Tamil citizens of various countries are engaged in preserving the palm leaf texts as digital texts, and of particular mention is that of Mr.Na.Kannan who resides in Germany (tamilheritage.org). In Karnataka and in Orissa there are many stone inscriptions and cave paintings which have to be deciphered, and like U.V.Swaminatha Iyer if many Tamilians look for Tamil Manuscripts from Museums and other places all over the world , lot of hidden history could be unraveled.

So far we have seen the opinion of various scholars who firmly held that the text and language of the Indus script is Dravidian. But there is a school, which is hell bent upon denying anything about “Dravidian “ and they call it as a British conspiracy to divide and rule such Aryan invasion theories were invented, forgetting their own rigvedic hymns. In nutshell this is what that school goes on shouting from all possible platforms. Why so? Let me quote John Hinnells and Eric Sharpe from their book “Hinduism “which will reveal the designs of these cultural eliminators.” *Until the discovery of the Indus Valley Civilization, the development of literature and culture in India was always credited to the Aryans. In 1920 archaeologists announced the discovery of extensive urban ruins in the Indus valley, which predated earliest archaeological sources and this caused scholars to reexamine their views on the different phases of Indian culture. The Rig Veda that speaks in such derogatory terms of the enemies subdued from by the Aryan tribes gives the impression that they were all savage barbarians. “*

There is another scholar who speaks about the conspiracy not of the British but of the nomadic invaders. “The Brahmins for centuries have degraded the original inhabitants of India with the intention of self elevation, preservation and oppression. These ancient dwellers in India were Dravidians, and in fact,

their culture had developed a highly sophisticated way of life. The existence of Brahui tribe in Baluchistan to the west of Indus, who speak a Dravidian language like South Indian Tamil, gives the evidence that a migration of people or culture did occur. Also the Harappan religion shows many similarities with the elements of Hinduism, which are especially popular in the present Dravidian culture. "(A.L.Basham in *The Wonder that was India* p 27)

However in pursuance of an attempt to systematically bury the truth an assertion began to be widely made that the Indus Valley civilization was not only Aryan, but also Vedic or even post-Vedic." Some professional archaeologists have embraced this view, though it might be contrary to what they had held earlier. The basic argument advanced by this school is that the main features of the Indus Civilization are quite consistent with those of the society and culture inferable from the rig veda." Irfan Habib smashes all these assumptions put forward as arguments that make no sense. "We shall consider the question of the reconcilability of the Rig veda, with what we know of the Indus valley civilization. Since the Rig-Veda is preeminently a religious text, consisting mainly of hymns to deities, the crucial area of comparison must be religious one. What the seals and copper amulets tell us is that the Indus deities were mostly zoomorphic, represented by the various animals, the most prominent animal being the Unicorn, the mythical one horned hump less bull, other animals include the bison, elephant, humped bull and rhinoceros, in the order of the frequency of the occurrence.

The great rigvedic deities are however, practically all anthropomorphic in conception (that is idealized human or superhuman forms) and zoomorphism is practically absent. Sarama is a dog like female deity in the late rigvedic hymn, but even here the contrast continues. The Indus seals give no evidence of a similar canine

deity (nor are the dog itself pictured on the seals). We may note that the cow so highly prized in the Rig-Veda and at least at one place deified, is not at all shown on the seals, where the honour belongs to the bull alone. The horse and the camel, sought in gifts by the rigvedic seers, are absolutely absent from these seals. On the other hand, the rigveda shows no perception of the mythical unicorn, or assign any sanctity to the animals like the elephant, rhinoceros or tiger.

The rigveda has nothing similar to the composite animals (tiger's body, bull's horn, and elephant trunks, for sample) on the Indus seals. Among the Indus day figurines found in private houses, representations of the Mother Goddess are particularly numerous. The rigveda has no female deity that is either as prominent or similarly linked to any fertility cult. There is no rigvedic goddess either, who has the body of a tiger, as an Indus cylinder seal. The lack of similarity continues when one considering the ways of disposing the dead. The Indus people buried their dead and there is no evidence at all of cremation. The rigveda on the other hand, recognizes cremation as the principal method, using the word non cremation (an-agnidaghal) for burial."

Whatever logic is there in this argument, the sadists who want to deny Dravidian people of anything that are great; continue with their single point agenda to spread untruths. The Discover Magazine in the following beautiful words describes the greatness of the Dravidian civilization. "No golden tomb, no fancy ziggurats. Four thousand years ago city builders in the Indus valley made deals, not war, and created a stable, peaceful and prosperous culture. Neither Vedas nor the Bible made any mention of this magnificent civilization. Yet they were a highly organized and stupendously successful civilization. They built some of the worlds first written languages, and thrived in an area twice the size of Egypt and Mesopotamia for 700 years. "

Well we have to look at the way Indus came to be associated with this civilization. "Harappa, in Sahiwal District of West Punjab, Pakistan had long been known to archaeologists as an extensive site on the Ravi River, but its significance as a major city of an early great civilization remained unrecognized until the discovery of Mohenja daro near the banks of the Indus, in the Larkana District of Sindh by R.D.Banerjee in 1922. Sir John Marshall, the then Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India used the term Indus civilization for the culture discovered at Harappa and Mohenja daro, a term doubly apt because of the geographical context implied in the name Indus and the presence of cities implied in the word civilization." says Irfan Habib in his book the Indus Valley Civilization "p 16.

In spite of the fact that this civilization is known as Indus because of the geography and is called as Dravidian because of the language and culture, yet the cultural eliminators are for centuries at pains to remove all traces of Dravidian content or to be more specific, the indigenous people's greatness, whose culture they had taken over by way of admixture and adulteration.

In 1893 V.Warren, an American wrote the book "The Paradise found or the Cradle of Human race at the North Pole. Heavily adopting the views put forth in that book Balagangadhara Tilak wrote a book 'The Arctic home of Vedas'. He and other of his school of thought, till date are burning midnight oil to aryanize a Dravidian culture. In Ukraine during 1966 Yu Kanygin brought out his book "The Path of the Aryans: The role of Ukraine in the spiritual History of Mankind". This book says that Rama's birthplace is not Ayodya but near the Driper river. It says Rama is from a tribe known as Druid. It will be of interest to know that Rama, whether a ruler or mythological hero, is a Dravidian born in the tribe of Druids near the Driper

River. While such etymological similarities drive home a picture, the cultural eliminators have now started to claim that the word Brahman has got its roots in Abraham. Abraham becomes Brahman. If that were so Christians and Hindus have common origin, and the propaganda of hate has no rational basis.

In Russia G.Grinevich released a book titled Praslavyanskaya Pismenmost in 1993. In that book he claims to have deciphered the Indus script and according to him it belongs to the Slavs. The language spoken by the people of Indus valley is Slav, he goes on. He even claims that the word Russia has its etymological roots in Sanskrit. Russ denotes white people and from such Sanskrit word Russia came, he says. He further adds that Motcham (Heaven) is the root for the name of the city of Moscow. All these planned propaganda apart, now we are facing with a situation wherein the Indus valley civilization is being renamed or rechristened, in order to sustain the untruth that it is not Dravidian.

“It has often been suggested that this was the civilization of the Saraswati river, not the Indus. Vedic literature gives importance to a river known as the Saraswati which it said, flowed from north east towards the lower Indus Valley through what are now provinces of Haryana, North Rajasthan and Bahawalpur, and is identified by the mostly dry river bed that is known as Ghagger in India and further downstream in Pakistan, as the Hakra. It has been said that there are several relic mounds of the period (khalibangan for example) spread along the banks of the Saraswathi river system, more sites than the alluvial valley of the Indus. Thus it has been claimed that what we have here is saraswathi rather than Indus civilization”

This is the argument put forth by those who want to name it as Saraswathi civilization. Shareen Ratnagar points out the difficulties in accepting this hypothesis.

“First fewer Harappan sites lie along the banks of Ghaggar-Hakra than is made out. Second there is no proof at all that the mighty sarasvati of the Rig-Veda was in fact this (now dry) river- the identification is itself open to doubt. Third when active the Ghaggar-Hakra was in any case a tributary to the Indus. Last, the term Saraswati conjures up a kind of identity between the culture reflected in the Vedic literature and that excavated at Harappa sites when, in fact there is hardly any correspondence. The label Saraswathi for all reasons, is difficult to defend on scholarly grounds “(p7 Understanding Harappa Civilization in the Greater Indus Valley)

Irfan Habib says, “The Indus basin includes the area along the Saraswathi, a small seasonal river, so that coupling of saraswathi with the Indus (Sindhu) has no geographical justification”

Dr.R.Madhivanan says that his researches in Rajasthan and Gujarat revealed that the local people refer the dead and missing river as “Quari kanya “. Quari became Gowri in Sanskrit and in Punjabi the word Gaur added as suffix, are all derived from Kumari, and the Tamil settlers not forgetting their origin had named this river as Kumari Kanya, after Kanya kumari, and thereby the so called Saraswathi river’s name is Kanya Kumari river named from Tamil sources.. He also says in Saurashtra, the Tamil settlers have named another river as Kaveri. He also says that if at all a mythical river Saraswathi had existed it flowed only in Afghanistan and not in India. The dreams of those who want to change the name of Indus into Saraswathi will receive the quake like hit and be smashed beyond redemption, putting an end to their futile exercise in renaming a globally known civilization.

Well apart from archaeology in land now a new research is being made out in underwater archaeology. The National Institute of Ocean Technology, Chennai,

last year unknowingly photographed the ruins of a vast ancient city submerged 40 m under the sea, while they took sonar photographs of the ocean floor. More dredging of the site brought out roughly 2000 artifacts, which were examined by the Birbal Shani Institute of Paleobotany in Lucknow and National Geographic Research Institute in Hyderabad. BSIP dated all the artifacts to be around 5500 BC and NGRI pushed the date back to 7500 BC. This discovery must have woken up the Dravidian people, especially the Tamils whose literary evidences prove that the origins of Tamils lay in Kumarikandam, the lost continent in the Indian Ocean. If lost cities could be found in Gulf of Cambay off the Gujarat coast, why not we search for the lost continent of Kumarikandam, the homeland of the Dravidians?

In Bangalore an exhibition of the artifacts found from Gulf of Cambay and our Poompuhar were displayed. Video pictures taken in underwater were shown, and to our delight the scientist Graham Cook said that Poompuhar had been submerged before 9500 years, thus even prior to Gulf of Cambay, our Poompuhar had a civilization dating back to 9500 years. These discoveries, which had taken place last year, are of great importance in our Review of the Recent Discoveries on Indus Civilization. Indus valley is only the catacomb of the Dravidian civilization as the destruction spoken in rigvedic hymns are to be believed. Instead the cradle of the Dravidian civilization is in Kumari kandam, otherwise called as Lemurian continent and Gondwana land.

Now that leads us to a multi pronged research approach because quest towards truth is a must. In a show in the National Geographical Channel titled the Journey of Man an answer was given, which gives us light on the direction to be pursued. "So far our way of investigating our ancestry has been to dig up ancient civilizations. Yet bones do not answer the question of evolution, but genes do," said scientist Spencer Wells.

“So we started mapping of a family tree of the entire planet taking blood samples from every part of the world. We worked backwards, through elimination and matching, and found that it was a strain of the sangene that was most common across the planet. Every person on earth is part of a connected family, scientists say with certainty, delivering blow to those who claim superiority by race and birth. The mapping of International rice Genome Sequencing project follows mapping of human genes. In such scientific quests, interesting information trickles down. The estimated gene in a human being lays around 30,000 to 40,000 whereas Indica rice contains 45,000 to 56,000 genes. Japonica Rice contains 63,000 genes.

Man and mouse are cousins, each descended from a small mammal that split into species towards the end of dinosaur era. Despite 75 million years of separate evolution only about 300 genes, 1 % of the 30,000 possessed by the mouse have no obvious counterpart in the human genome, says Nature Magazine. Taking the cue from these scientific quests, I feel that there is a strong necessity for mapping all the worlds' languages. Of course UNESCO had brought out Atlases and strives hard to redeem endangered languages. 18 countries make an attempt together in a Universal Network Language project, aimed at using computers to demolish the Tower of Babel. The purpose behind this project is of course trade promotion by way of making translations easy and faster. But I feel that to understand the etymology of every word spoken in every language living or dead a globalized attempt should be made by UNESO or the Universities of the nations in partnership to harness their common knowledge to track down the etymology of every word spoken. *It is quest undertaken by the Greatest Tamilian of the past century Devaneyya Paavanar and his approach needs scientific sanction and pooling of the worlds knowledge to arrive at the cultural and linguistic roots including the Primitive language of the Mankind.*

Already scientists are engaged in the quest and had succeeded initially. Mr. Wolfgang Enand of Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig, Germany in the Nature Magazine dated 14 th August 2002 states proudly that “First language gene is discovered. Scientists think they have found the first of the many genes that gave humans speech. Without it language and human culture may never have developed. Key changes to a gene in the last 2, 00,000 years of human evolution appear to be the driving force. The gene FOXP2 was first definitely linked with human knowledge.” Having found the first gene that gave humans speech, the quest towards tracing the first language spoken by man had gained impetus. Meanwhile treading the path laid down by Deveneya Paavanar, Dr.R.Mathivanan opines that a new approach called language archaeology ,be used to trace the roots of various words spoken in various languages which have common root from the Primitive language.

Dr. Robert Caldwell’s Comparative Grammar of Dravidian Languages published in 1856 is still hailed as a remarkable turning point in tracing the glorious past, yet even after so many decades, no serious attempt is being made to update this with all the information we have, extending to all the languages of the Dravidian family, including ones spoken in Pakistan and Northern India. Pondicherry Institute of Linguistics and Culture, International school of Dravidian Linguistics at Thiruvananthapuram, Dravidian University at Kuppam in Andhra Pradesh and International Institute of Tamil studies at Chennai must join hands to produce an updated Grammar on Dravidian Linguistics, which must cover other Dravidian family of languages spread all over the world. This will be of great help in establishing the claim of Tamil as the primary classical language.

The Tamil epic Silapathigaram provides us with the literary evidence about the deluge that washed away a

landmass in the Indian Ocean. Mr. James Churchward by studying various ancient texts, it is claimed, had discovered the existence of a long lost continent with an advanced civilization that 60,000 years ago had sunk below the Pacific Ocean after a cataclysmic earthquake. There were 64 million people who died in the sinking, and that is dated back over 50,000 years. The Hawaiian Islands and the Pacific islands are the remaining mountain peaks of the lost continent. Well if Mr. James Churchward's literary evidence cannot be brushed aside, we cannot also brush aside the Silapathikaram couplet. If a detailed study is conducted in Hawaii and Pacific islands perhaps we may be able to know about the lost continent, the homeland of Tamils. Lemuria is otherwise called Pacifica or Mu. James Churchward in his book "The Lost continent of Mu" maintains that "vast knowledge of science, ancient art and history, mythology and occult" existed in the lost continent of Lemuria. "The garden of Eden was not in Asia but now on a sunken continent in the Pacific ocean," he proclaims and adds "The biblical story of Creation came first not from the peoples of Nile or the Euraphrates valley but from this now submerged continent, Mu- Motherland of Man. Please note that it is being called Motherland and not Fatherland, as is usual with the cultural eliminators opposed to Dravidian viewpoints. In his book "The Children of Mu" this scholar says, "Sixty three million people lived on the now lost continent of Mu over 2,00,000 years ago.

The children of Mu became the first influential people on earth.... America was one of the first colonies of Mu... Mu had an incredibly sophisticated government, flowering of culture and scientific technology." Much of the Lemurian civilization lived in homes with transparent roofs. They were free from stress and disease lived to be hundreds of years old, developing their E.S.P abilities through nearly 40,000 years of societal practice and experimentation. With that many centuries of evolution, Lemurians gained their

reputation or telepathy, astral travel and teleportation-making land vehicles unnecessary. They were primarily socially a vegetarian, agricultural, outdoor, organic culture that worked in harmony with nature and the land, having little use for scientific technology.”

It is to be noted that we always take it as a gospel, when it comes from the white man’s mouth. But we realize little that scholars like Devaneyya Paavaanar are not among those who have lost their mental equilibrium nor they are nincompoops, but they are treasure troves of knowledge, which a common good is delivered to Tamil people. Speaking about Lemurian Tamils Paavaanar will trace the development of Tamil between 100,000 and 50,000 BC. Spencer Wells and his team of scientists has now found out that the first man originated before 60,000 years. We Tamils somehow have become addicted to the use of the phrase Two Thousand years old to claim a hoary past for our culture. Christian calendar alone cannot be the period of inception of the Dravidian culture. Millions of years ago what happened, we have to indulge in a quest, and not be satisfied with the accidental unearthing of the Indus Valley Civilization.

From Australia to Arizona there exists a mythological proof of the lost continent. To quote from a Hopi legend ‘down on the bottom of the seas laid all the proud cities and the worldly treasures corrupted with evil. Faced with such disaster, some people hid inside the earth while the others escaped by crossing the ocean on reed rafts, using the islands as stepping-stones. The same story to escape to dry land appears in the Popul Vu epic of the Quiche Maya and the Modoc tribe near Mount Shasta among others.

“According to the Rosicrucian’s of San Jose, California, the disastrous cycle began with volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, and the collapse of the subterranean gas belts. Magnetic waves started moving around the globe, and Lemuria began to go under. Fortunately

there was time enough for small groups to salvage part of Lemurias precious wisdom, which was stored in crystals. Some colonists reached India and from there Mesopotamia and Egypt, while others migrated eastwards on crude rafts to the Americas, forming the racial core of the earliest Indian tribes.

So it is not Silapathigaram alone, the stories of various tribes speak about the lost continent, and it is here, in the Indian Ocean south of Kanyakumari the National institute of Oceanography must engage in underwater archaeological quest to find out the cradle of the Dravidian civilization that spread from South to North encompassing the Indus valley and countries beyond.

The Super Continent of Gondwanaland was made up of South America, Africa, Antarctica, India and Australia.” Gondwanaland is named after the upper Paleozoic and Mesozoic formations of the Gondwanaland district of central India which display a number of shared geologic features (The Gondwana Beds). In the late nineteenth century, on the basis of comparative geological evidence, the Austrian geologist, Edward Stress suggested that the continents of Africa, South America, Australia and India were once part of a single super continent, which he called Gondwanaland.”

Alfred Wagener, known as the father of the theory of Continental drift, in his publication around 1912 said that “ looking at the global map it would appear that the continents could be brought together to fit like a jigsaw puzzle” Now everyone admits that the solid upper earth floats on asthenosphere, the lithosphere slips.

“The vast Himalayan range was created when a plate of the earth crust carrying the landmass of India collided with the plate carrying Asia some 45 million years ago having traveled 5000 kilometers nearly due north across the expanse now occupied by the Indian ocean’ opines D.P.Meckinzie and J, G.Sclater in their article “

The evolution of the Indian Ocean'. Apart from the literary evidences, when we look forward to understand the evolution of Dravidian civilization we will have to get answers over the puzzle about the Indian Ocean, wherein the cradle of the Dravidian civilizations remains buried.

Scholars say that” Many attempts have been made to guess precisely how south America, Africa, India, Antarctica and Australia were once joined to form the primitive continent known as Gondwanaland. There is as yet no general agreement as to how this should be done. The rift between Australia and Antarctica is good. The arrangement of all five major units however is controversial and the original position of Madagascar is unknown. The principal difficulty is that no magnetic lineation has yet been discovered on the older parts of the floor of the Indian Ocean between the continents. We therefore cannot continue to reassemble continents by the same methods we have used to trace the movement of India. During the past 75 million years. There is also no other structure like the Ninety East Ridge which was recognized as a transform fault even before the magnetic lineation were mapped. Fortunately, the area of the sea floor in which the record presumably lies hidden is not great. Last year a series of deep holes were drilled in the floor of the Indian Ocean by the drilling vessel” Glomar Challenger. The data from these holes have confirmed and amplified our reconstruction of the history of the ocean. They have also added to the evidence needed to reconstruct Gondwanaland”

“Meanwhile one can speculate about the original juxtapositions of India, Antarctica and Australia. One guess is that existing reconstructions are wrong because they have attempted to remove practically every piece of the ocean floor between the continents. That approach has been favoured because all continents believed to have formed the Gondwanaland show evidence of having been covered by a huge ice cap 270 million years ago. We know from recent

glaciations in the Northern hemisphere that continental ice caps can simultaneously cover landmasses that are separated by oceans. It may be that a small ocean basin comparable perhaps to the Artic Ocean, was nestled somewhere among the southern landmass 270 million years ago. It may be out of our ignorance of its existence and shape that is preventing the successful reconstruction of Gondwanaland "This is how the Indian Ocean puzzle remains according to D.P.Meckenzie and J.G.Slater.

And it is the duty of our government as well of nations that border within Indian Ocean must indulge in a joint search for answers to these puzzles. Unless the submerged Kumari Kandam is subjected to in depth study, it will be impossible to back up our literary evidences with scientific proofs, and the National Institute of Oceanography must be engaged to unravel these facts. While excavating Arikamedu, all efforts to look into the ocean floor near Pondicherry for further evidences is a must.

And let the quest to find the cradles of mankind as well as our homeland begin. Truth is awaiting us and we must march towards truth and in pursuance of truth all efforts must be made by Tamils all over the world apart from fighting falsehoods spread day in and day out, against Dravidian culture.

Na.Nandhivarman
General Secretary DRAVIDA PERAVAI

THE TAMIL FRENCH LITERARY CONNECTIONS

N.Nandhivarman

Thiruvalluvar's Thirukural is Tamils pride and everybody's guide in life. Secularism, essence of our constitutional principles springs from each and every couplet of this great treatise of wisdom written 2000 years ago. And Sir C.P.Ramasamy Iyer places a befitting tribute to its grandeur on record. In his preface to the French Translation of Thirukural Sir C.P.Ramasamy Iyer says "It has been rightly remarked that the Kural addresses itself to all classes and communities, and indeed to the whole human race and charges itself with the promulgation of virtue and of right conduct in the guise of familiar and friendly advice. In a series of pithy maxims, it lays down rules of universal acceptability dealing with most of our domestic and social problems and situations. In the well known words of the philosopher, Spinoza, it is written sub specie eternitate though characterized by tenderness and comprehensive human sympathy, human life and love in all their forms as well as the regular of existence in the social and economic fields are alike dealt with on the basis of practical spirituality".

Thirukural, the secular book on morals had been translated in many languages and is next to that of Bible in the number of such translations. The French version of Thirukural rendered by a great *littérateur* Mr.Gnanou Diagou had fascinated many scholars. It is a matter of pride to all Pondicherrians that Mr.Gnanou Diagou is one of the illustrious sons of this soil having earned a name and fame in the 19th century. Thirukural had been translated into the following languages. **1) Burmese** Mr. Myo Thant, Thirukkural **2) Chinese** Mr. Chi Eng Hsi, Thirukkural (1967) **3). Czech** Mr. Kamil V Zvelebil, Thirukural (1952-1954 **4) Dutch** Mr. D.Kat, Thirukural (Netherlands, 1964) **5) Fiji**, Mr.S.L Berwick, Na.

Thirukkurala, 1964) **6) Finnish** Mr. Aalto, Pentit, and Kural - The Ancient Tamil Classic (1972) **7) German** Albrecht, Fenz and K. Lalithambal: Thirukural von Thiruvalluvar aus dem Tamil, Madurai (1977), Mr.A.F Cammera, Thirukural Leipzig (1803) Mr Karl. Graul, Der Kural des Thiruvalluvar, (London 1854), Mr. Karl Graul, Der Tamu lische gnomes dichter Thiruvalluvar, (Leipzig, 1865) Mr.Frederick Rickert Thirukural, selections, (Berlin, 1847) Mr. William and Norgate, Der Kural des Thiruvalluvar, (2nd ed, London, 1866) **8) French** Ariel, M, Kural de Thiruvalluvar (traduits du tamoul), Paris, 1848, Barrigue de, Fontaineu, G, Le livre de l'amour de Thiruvalluva, Paris, 1889, Danielou, Alain, Thiruvallouvar Kural, Pondicherry, 1942, Jacolliot, Louis, Kural de Thiruvalluvar, (selections) Paris, 1767 Lamairesse, M, thirukural in French, Pondicherry, 1867) **9) Latin** Graul, Charles, Kural of Thiruvalluvar, Tranquebar, 1866 Veeramamunivar, Thirukural (Books I and II), London, 1930 **10) Malay** Ismail, Hussein: Thirukural sastera kalasik Tamil yang, Kuala Lumpur, 1967, Ramily Bin Thakir Thirukural (in verses), Kuala Lumpur, 1964 **11) Polish** Umadevi, Wandy Dynowskiev, Thiruvalluvar Kural, Madras, 1958 **12) Russian** J.J Glazov and Krishnamurthi, A, Thirukural, a book on virtue, politics and love, Moscow, 1963 Glazov, Thirukural in couplets with illustrations, Moscow, 1974 **13) Swedish** Frykholm Ingya, Thirukural, Uddavalla, 1971. The list is incomplete. The complete list of languages in which Thirukural got translated is yet to be compiled. The irony is we live in an age of information technology where at our fingertips we should keep these facts. Many authors will boast that next to Bible the only other book that was translated in many languages is Thirukural. Yet none bothers to compile the data of all such translations undertaken and books published in various languages. Let scholars and institutions start compiling such lists, uploading in the Net to enable all Tamil lovers' easy access. Particularly Pondicherry with all its connections with France and with prestigious institutes like French Institute functioning here it will

be appropriate that better coordination exists between Pondicherry University, Pondicherry Institute of Linguistics and Culture which hopes to become a deemed University soon and other Tamil scholars well versed in both the languages.

A great bilingual scholar Desigam Pillai in his book **Tamizhagamum Frenchukararum** dutifully records the services of scholars who promoted cultural exchanges with zeal. The Jesuits priests who came here to propagate their religion learnt Tamil and for the purpose of their kinsmen to understand the nuances of Tamil they wrote many books in French. The services of Mr. Boucher (1655-1732), Mr. De la Lane (1669-1746), Mr. Bouze (1673-1735), Mr. Gargam (1690-1742), Mr. Calmette (1693-1740), Mr. Coeurdoux (1699-1774) in writing books to help French acquire proficiency in Tamil, is thus listed by Desigam Pillai.

Mr. Desigam Pillai, a lawyer and Tamil scholar also mentions the names of those who learnt Tamil. Mr. Perrin (1754-1820), Mr. Maguy (1758-1822), Mr. Dubois (1770-1848), Mr. Dupuis (1806-1874), Mr. Mousset (1808-1888), Mr. Legouste (1880-1863), Mr. Lap (1834-1893). These lists may be tiring to normal readers. But it is a list to be remembered to understand the cultural fraternity that developed between the French and Tamil-speaking peoples.

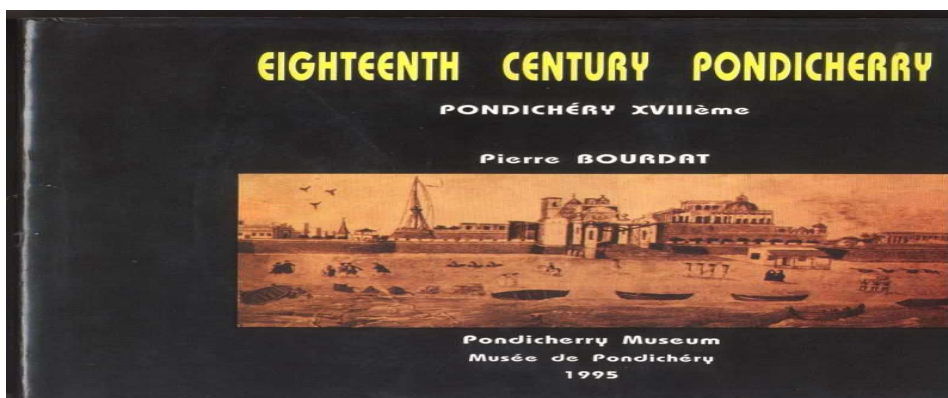
Many scholars who collected the Tamil manuscripts and palm leaf texts during their stay in Pondicherry had given them to the Bibliotheque Nationale de Paris. Even now in many homes including this writer there remains palm leaf texts ravaged by time. It is high time that academic institutions in the soil of Pondicherry and the Governments here that speak of heritage engage in a quest to collect all such texts, digitalize them and microfilm such rare collections hidden in Museums of both countries and private homes.

Messrs. Mousset and Dupuis wrote the *Dictionnaire Franais Tamoul (French Tamil Dictionary)* running into

1270 pages and a *Dictionnaire Tamoul Français-2 Vols.* (Tamil French Dictionary) running into 1660 pages. Mr. Jules Gordin who came from France to contest an election here for the house of elders and who became a French Senator took steps to start Tamil section in the Paris University. The dream came true in 1879. From 1890 in the Ecole des Langues Orientales Tamil classes became a reality. Mr. Vinson Julien wrote a grammar called *Manuel De La Language Tamoule Grammaire, Texts, Vocabulaire*, and Mr. P. Lap, *A Brege De La Grammaire Française Tomoule*. Mr. M. J. Baulez wrote on colloquial Tamil *Méthode De Tamoul Vulgaire*

These are the pioneers and many authors who succeeded them had laid down firmly the path of inter cultural exchange and language fraternity. To a layman it appears that in the post independence era, these exchanges have mellowed down, and an impetus is needed to reactivate the vigour with which Tamil was welcomed with open arms by French. The entire French literature must be translated into Tamil and vice versa.

The unfinished agenda must be undertaken with renewed interest. Before the old generation that had mastery over both languages bids adieu to earthly existence, these unfinished tasks must be taken up with urgency, while for younger generations the need to nourish this cultural legacy left between the most lovable languages on earth, becomes a quest with thirst for knowledge.



CONSTRUCTIVE STEPS TO CONSTRUCT HISTORY OF TAMILS

N.Nandhivarman General Secretary Dravida Peravai

Dravida Peravai, a political party which wants to set an example what a political party of Tamils ought to do have decided to launch a website for publishing all information about Tamil history in one resource bank which will encompass the history of Tamil spread across continents inclusive of Tamil Eelam. Though we will be coordinating this effort we appeal to scholars all over the world to come forward with research based articles to establish our past to evaluate our present and to set the agenda for future.

The necessity to launch a history website arose when I read the book ***“Kadaikazhaga Noolhalin Kaalamum Karuthum*** [Period and Message of Sangam Literature 500 B.C to 500 A.D] written by Dr.R.Mathivanan Former Director of Tamil Etymological Dictionary Project of Government of Tamilnadu. In the preface to the book the learned scholar says, “Japanese have preserved their past history spanning to 2440 years, whereas Egyptians and Sumerians recall with pride their 4000 years of history. The 3000-year-old history of Chinese gives them a unique place. But Tamils with 10000 year of history have not brought it to the world arena.

In Chicago Museum a portrait depicting a Tamil climbing a Palmyra tree mentioning him as Tamil came to the notice of Aringnar Anna that was taken up with the authorities. Instead of many cultural achievements of Tamils this portrait showed Tamil in derogative manner, and on protest the portrait was not removed but the word Tamil in the portrait was deleted.

Lamenting about lack of a Museum to depict Tamil Culture, the scholar says that he had relied upon the travelogues of foreigners, literary evidences thrown to light in other languages, recent archaeological findings and the findings of historians who have so far dealt with the History of Tamils. His book would be a

compilation of all these evidences in a nutshell, he claims. In Rasatarangini the author Kallanar had brought to light the History of Kashmir from 1800 B.C to 1200 A.D.

Like this literary evidence which helped to construct the History of Kashmir, in Tamil the book Nankudi Velir Varalaru comprising 1035 poems and written by Arumuga Nayinar Pillai, which was published in 1920 throws light on the Tamil history, the learned author claims.

This book speaks about the family hierarchy of Irungovel, a branch of the Pandyan rulers for 201 generations. This book follows the Kali calendar and narrates the history from 3100 B.C to 1944, hence helps in fixing the date of various rulers and their rule, the author says.

Pandyan dynasty.

Pandyan Palsalai Muthukudumi Peruvazhuthi [66th generation] 500-450 B.C

Karungai Ollvat Perum Peyar vazhuthi [67th generation] 450 B.C to 400 B.C

Porval Vazhuthi [68th generation] 400 B.C to 380.B.C

Korkai Vazhuthi-Nartreer Vazhuthi [69th generation] 380B.C-340 B.C

Deva Pandian [70th generation] 340 B.C-302 B.C

Seya Punjan aliasKadalul maintha Ilamperuvazhuthi [71st] 302B.C-270.B.C

Pasum Poon Pandyan [72nd generation] 270.B.C –245.B.C

Ollaiyur thantha Boothapandian [73rd generation] 245 B.C-220 B.C

Pandyan Nanmaran [74th generation] 220 B.C-200 B.C

Nedunchezhian alias Kadalan vazhithi [75th generation] 200B.C-180 B.C

Marungai Vazhuthi [76th generation] 180 B.C-160 B.C

Pandyan Uthaman alias Puliman vazhuthi [77th] 160B.C-150 B.C

Pandyan Keeran Sathan [78th generation] 150 B.C-140 B.C

Kaliman Vazhuthi alias Andar magan Kuruvazhuthi [79th] 140-120 B.C

Pandyan Yenathi @Nedunkannan [80th] 120 B.C-100 B.C

Korkai Vazhuthi@ Irandam Pasum Poon Pandyan [81st] 100-87 B.C

Deva Pootanan@ Ilavanthikai palli tunjiya Nanmaran [82nd] 87-62 B.C

Thalayanankanathu Cheru Vendra Nedunchezhian [83rd] 62-42 B.C

Kanapereyil kadantha Ukkira Peruvazhuthi [84th] 42 B.C-1 A.D

Pandyan Arivudainambi {Purananooru 184} [85th] A.D 1-30 A.D

Velliyambalathu tunjiya PeruVazhuthi [86th] 30 A.D-60 A.D

Ariyapadai Kadantha Nedunchezhian [87th] 60 A.D-117 A.D

Vetriver Chezhian [88th generation] 117 A.D-160 A.D.

Nedunchezhian II [89th generation] 160 A.D –198 A.D

Ukkira Maran@ Chitramadathu tunjiya Nanmaran [90th] 198 A.D-220 A.D

Pannadu thantha Maran Vazhuthi [91st] 220A.D-250 A.D

Koddakarathu tunjiya Maranvazhuthi [92nd] 250 A.D-270 A.D

Thennavan Ko [93rd generation] 270 A.D-297 A.D

Parakirama Bahu @ Nalvazhuthi [94th generation] 298A.D -310 A.D

Kaliyan Koothan [95th generation].....

Kadalan Vazhuthi [of Kazhugumalai inscriptions] [96th generation]

Porkai Pandyan[98th generation].....

Pandyan Kadunkhon [103rd generation] 475 A.D-490 A.D

Ukkira Pandyan [103rd generation] —498 A.D

Somasundara Pandyan[105thgeneration] 498 A.D-540 A.D.

113 year Pact between Three Tamil Emperors

The Nandhas who ruled North India had fraternal relationship with Three Tamil Emperors but the Mauryas who followed them invaded South India. **Imayavaramban Neduncheralathan** marched up to

Himalayas and inscribed his country symbol, which could not assimilated by the Mauryas who came to Chera country as act of revenge. But the Mauryan armies did not sneak into Chozha territory. This invasion brought home the need to remain united, the call given even now by Kalaigiar M.Karunanithi but with no useful purpose to alter ground reality on Tamil disunity.

The unity urge united the Three Tamil Emperors who met to sign a Pact of Cooperation in the year 313 B.C, the author Dr.Mathivanan says. **Imayavaramban Neduncheralathan, Karungai Olvat Perumvazhuthi and Deva Pandian** [70th] jointly signed the declaration of unity that lasted for 113 years. This Treaty of Tamil Unity stood as a rock protecting Tamil lands from Northern invaders.

In the final years of the unity era during 200 B.C, in the Chozha Emperor Karikalan II's court Poetess **Mudathamakanniyar** who wrote **Porunaratrupadai** witnessed the rare scene of Three Tamil Emperors sharing same dais which she records in her **Porunaratrupadai** [53-55]. Poet **Kumattor Kannanar** who wrote the second ten in **Pathitru Pathu** also records the historical meeting of Three Tamil Emperors for which he stands as eyewitness. Later in 42 B.C, Poetess **Avvaiyar** also had the luck to see Three Tamil Emperors together in a rare scene of Unity among Tamils. That unity did not last nor the lessons of unity learnt till date by Tamils.

THE CHERA EMPERORS:

1. **Vanavan @ Vanavaramban [430-350 B.C]**
2. **Kuttuvan Uthiyan Cheralathan [350-328 B.C] ruled for 22 years**
3. **Imayavaramban Neduncheralathan [328-270 B.C] ruled for 58 years**
4. **Palyaanai Chelkezhut Kuttuvan [270-245 B.C] ruled for 25 years**
5. **Kalangaikanni narmudicheral [245-220 B.C] ruled for 25 years**
6. **Perumcheralathan [220-200 B.C] ruled for 20 years**

7. *Kudakko Neduncheralathan [200-180 B.C] ruled for 20 years*
8. *Kadal Pirakottiya Velkezh u kuttuvan [180-125 B.C] ruled 55 years*
9. *Adukotpattuch Cheralathan [125-87 B.C] ruled 38 years*
10. *Selvak kadungo Vazhiyathan [87-62 B.C] ruled 25 years*
11. *Yanaikatchei Mantharanj Cheral Irumborai [62-42 B.C] ruled 20 years*
12. *Thagadoor Erintha Perum Cheral Irumborai [42-25 B.C] ruled 17 years*
13. *Ilancheral Irumborai [25-19 B.C] ruled 16 years*
14. *Karuvur Eriya Koperumcheral Irumborai [9-1 B.C]*
15. *Vanji Mutrathu tunjiya Anthuvancheral [B.C 20 – 10 A.D]*
16. *Kanaikal Irumborai [20-30 A.D]*
17. *Palai Padiya Perum kadungko [1-30 A.D]*
18. *Kokothai Marban [[30 –60 A.D]*
19. *Cheran Chenguttuvan [60-140 A.D]*
20. *Kottambalathu tunjiya Maakothai [140-150 A.D]*
21. *Cheraman mudangi kidantha Nedumcheralathan [150-160 A.D]*
22. *Cheraman Kanaikkal Irumborai [160-180 A.D]*
23. *Cheraman Ilamkuttuvan [180-200 A.D]*
24. *Thambi Kuttuvan [200-220 A.D]*
25. *Poorikko [220-250 A.D]*
26. *Cheraman Kuttuvan Kothai [250-270 A.D]*
27. *Cheraman Vanjan [270-300 A.D]*
28. *Mantharanj Cheral [330-380 A.D] found in Allahabad inscriptions of Samudragupta.*

RECONSTRUCTION OF CHOZHA RULE

1. *Karikalan I [450-380 B.C]*
2. *Cheraman Paamaloorerintha Neythalanganal Ilamchetchenni [380-320 B.C]*
3. *Cherupaazhi erintha Ilamchetchenni [320-270 B.C]*
4. *Perumpoon chenni [270-245 B.C]*
5. *Uruva Paikhrer Ilamchetchenni [245-232 B.C]*
6. *Karikalan II [232-200 B.C]*

7. Manakkilli [200-180 B.C]
8. Vel pahradaikkai Peruviral Killi [180-160 B.C]
9. Pooravaikopp Perunarkkili [160-125 B.C]
10. Mudithalai Koperunarkkili [125-87 B.C]
11. Koperum Chozhan [87-62 B.C]
12. Otrumai Vetta Perunarkkili [62-40 B.C]
13. Chetchenni Nalankilli @ Maavalathan [40-22 B.C]
14. Kulamutrathu tunjiya Killivalavan [B.C22 - 1 A.D]
15. Kurapalli tunjiya Perum Thirumavalavan [1-40 A.D]
16. Neythalankanai Ilamchetchenni [40-60 A.D]
17. Karikalan III [60-110 A.D]
18. Maavan Killi [110-130 A.D]
19. Nedumudikkili [130-150 A.D]
20. Chenganan [150-180 A.D]
21. Isai Ve ngilli 180-210 A.D]
22. Kaivankilli [210-240 A.D]
23. Polampoonkili [240-260 A.D]
24. Kadumankilli [260-285 A.D]
25. Nalladi [285-330 A.D] known by Agananooru 356th poem
26. Chozha Rule in Andhra [300-400 A.D]

Dr.Mathivanan had undertaken a thankless job. We would urge Tamils all over the world to buy the book **“Kadaikkazha Noolhalin Kaalamum Karuthum** published by Thilagam Pathipagam 17 E, B-1, 12. K.K.Ponnuram Salai, Omsakthinagar, Valasaravakkam, Chennai 600087 Tel: 044-24861007 or contact the author at: rmvanan@gmail.com Cell: 9283217788.

Basing the Tamil epic Perumkathai, a historical note is hidden in the poem⁴¹⁴ of **Narkudi Vellalar Varalaru**. It says in B.C 701 a Tamil King Udayanan defeated the Aryans and ruled North India. If he had continued to rule or if he had not succumbed to the submissive Aryan pretenders, The Gupta rule could not have come up, the appendix of the book states. Well our scholars will fight like street dogs for centuries instead of fixing the period of Tamil epics or Tamil Kings. It is within the genes of Tamils not to accept another Tamil as scholar. If a white skinned

scholar tells all will fall in line. This mentality must go. Nothing wrong in debating but not debating beyond centuries is illogical. In 1921 Maraimalai Adigal established that Tamils must follow Thiruvalluvar Calendar alone. But we still follow the Sanskritized Tamil Calendar. This is a curse on Tamils. We are for changing this mentality to usher in Tamil unity. But suddenly an NGO of Chennai called us traitors of Eelam cause. Let dogs bark but the sun will rise. Let us hail the new dawn of Tamil unity. Let us join hands to reconstruct Tamil history.

[coutesy : Tamilnation.org]



Dr.Ira.Mathivanan wrote a book fixing the year of Thollappiar, and Dravida Peravai organized a function at Puthuvai Tamil Sangam to introduce that book which was released by the Dean of Tamil Department of Puducherry University Dr.A.Arivunambi.

Octogenarian Kalaimaamani Sithan receives the book.Also seen in picture Nandhivarman, Syed Khader Organizing Secretary Dravida Peravai,MDMK Publications Secretary A.Vanthiyathevan, Kalaimaamani Villisai Vendhar Pattabiraman.

EARTH QUAKES, TSUNAMIS AND CONTINENTAL DRIFT

N.Nandhivarman

Tsunami hit Pondicherry recently and people were taken aback at its ferocity. The least expected unfolding of the Nature's fury has stirred a debate on the changes in our coastline. Why did it happen and how it happened are subjects of current debate. Earth's surface rests divided into 12 plates. Now the 13th plate is in the offing. Throughout history scientists believe continents to be drifting, moving closer, or breaking from one another. Pangaea, the most recent super-continent on Earth began to break 160 million years ago. **Paul Hoffman, Professor of Geology at Harvard University** opines that while Pangaea broke up the Atlantic Ocean opened splitting North America from Eurasia. Then North America parted from Eurasia subsequently South America from Africa, Australia, Antarctica and India separated from Africa creating the Indian Ocean. The same scholar says, "Atlantic and Indian Oceans continue to widen while Pacific gets smaller. In 100 million years North America and Asia will probably drift into each other". Paul Hoffman had already named the new super-continent as Amasia.

Jeffrey Welssel at Columbia University's Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory says, "The result of this crucial stage in the collision between India and Asia is the breakup of the Indo Australian Plate into separate Indian and Australian plates". He also said " In The Central Indian Ocean Nature is conducting a large scale experiment for us, showing us what happens to oceanic lithosphere (earth's outer layer) when a force is applied." This experiment had its repercussions, when on fault lines earthquakes hit almost exactly where Indo Australian plates have broken.

Group of researchers from **NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center** have provided with schematic global

tectonic activity map, which shows several types of faults, active spreading centers, and volcanoes. The fault-lines or geo fractures are areas where we must watch and take all precautions in constructions to save lives.

This may be a global watch, but Pondicherrian's have specific areas to observe. **A Report on Ground Water Survey and Exploration in the Union Territory of Pondicherry and its environs** by a team of experts from Central Ground Water Board, Southern region in March 1973 says that "The photo-geological study has also confirmed the existence of the fault to the west of the coastline a straight scarp running almost parallel to Pondicherry- Markanam Road" That finding was made three decades ago.



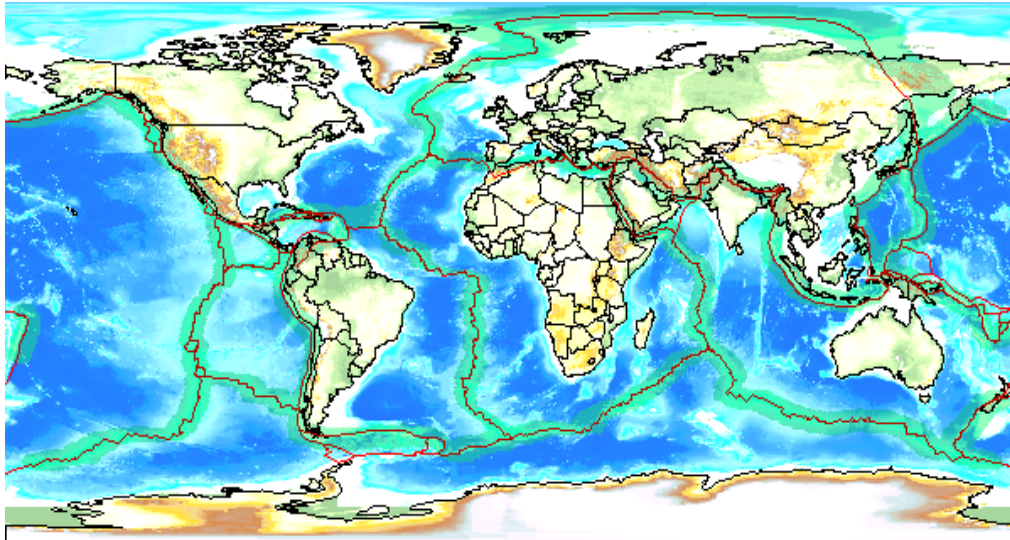
Dr.S.M.Ramasamy Director of Center for Remote Sensing of Bharathidasan University as early as 1993 said, "The East North East- West South West trending faults on the contrary are showing left handed (sinistrel) ongoing translational movements. Such sinisterly and dextrally moving faults display definite morph tectonic anomalies in the remotely sensed data and also in the field. In addition, there is a

conspicuous land subsidence between Pondicherry in the North East and Cumbum valley in the South West.

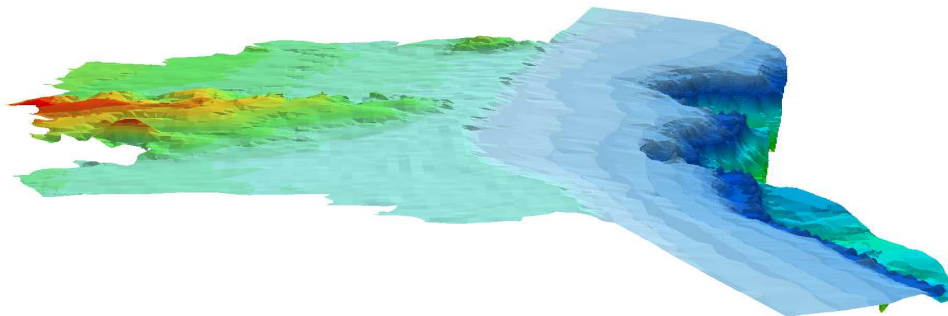
One such graben has been established along north east- southwest trending faults in between Pondicherry-Cuddalore in the northeast and Cumbum valley in the Southwest. It is significant to observe that the earthquake epicenters fall along such NE-SW trending fault in Cuddalore, Ariyalor, Dindigul and Kodaikanal.

In view of a geo-fracture i.e. fault line from Kalapet in Pondicherry to Cumbum Valley in South Tamil Nadu, great caution must be taken in construction of high rise structures wherever fault lines have been identified. Earthquake resistant construction design in places where one fault line passes, as mentioned above, is need of the hour. There are pictures taken by satellites using remote sensing techniques had identified studies covering Tamil Nadu its and various fault lines. It is high time sky scrappers do not come up in the fault line and quake prone areas.

While Earthquake precautions are need of the hour, the new threat to Tamil Nadu's coast comes by way of Tsunamis. Tsunami is a known phenomenon in Pacific Ocean stretching from Chile in Latin America to Japan in Far East Asia. Seismic disturbances, coastal earthquakes, volcanic eruptions or under sea landslides that jolt the ocean floor cause tsunamis, which travels at speeds up to 500 miles per hour and reaches heights between 50 and 100 feet. Tsunami observatories and Earth Quake observatories must be set up for early warning systems. People living in low-lying coastal areas have faced the brunt. "It is high time fishermen settlements are shifted to higher grounds. World Bank and global assistance that is forthcoming must be utilized to create fishermen colonies in high ground "opines Narambai Kanagasabai, President of Narambai Fishermen Panchayat of Pondicherry state.



The green house effect causes rise in sea water levels. Scientists have predicted that by 2100 A.D the rise in sea level will be between 0.5 to 1.5 meters. Before 1.5 million years Sea was closer to Madurai and before 90,000 years Chennai, Pondicherry and Vedaranyam were surrounded by sea. Due to fall in sea levels 65,000 years ago India and Ceylon joined and when sea level rose around 27,000 years ago they parted. Then 17,000 years ago due to fall in water level both joined and when water rose they parted. This is the study-report of Bharathidasan University's Earth Sciences Department. All these studies and past history makes it clear that our coastline had undergone changes over centuries. Poompuhar of Chola Empire is beneath the seas. Sirkazhi once a coastal town is now an interior town. So changes in our coast are continuous. Caution must be taken about all dwellings in our coast, and let this tsunami attack be an eye opener.



[Courtesy :New Indian Express :1st January 2005]

UNIVERSAL FESTIVAL OF HARVEST

N.Nandhivarman

Tamils are celebrating Pongal. In North India it is known as Sankranthi. This festival of harvest is universal one practiced by remote tribes on earth and people of various cultures, which again proves the oneness of humanity.

In the Volga region when the Sun was moving in the direction of spring, people came together to forecast the future harvest. The Mari and Chuvashes, tribal groups in Volga region prepared special food for this festival of harvest. These festivals were connected with first ploughing and sowing. The festivities took place in the field. A little bit of food was sacrificed to Mother Earth.

Slav people had their sun deities. They were called Svarog, Dazhbog, and Khors. The word god (**bag**) is same in all Slavic languages. You can see the resemblance with Iranian **bagā** and Indian **bhagwan** with the Slavic bag. These similarities also remind us that beliefs are universal.

The Zulus of South Africa worshipped the Goddess Nomkubulwana. They believed that this goddess made land fertile and was the mythical originator of agriculture. Only women did all farming work among Zulu tribes and they only performed rites and chanted prayers for a good harvest.

Almost all people of the Caucasus region worshipped guardians of harvest and other kind of livestock. Does it make us think about **Maattu Pongal**, thanksgiving to cattle prevalent among Tamil people?

Celtic gods were guardians of fertility and agriculture. River Gods and Spring Gods were existent. Esus was the god of plant life.

In Mexico the agrarian influence could be seen in the **Uitzilopochtli** cult. During the celebrations held twice

a year an enormous dummy of the God was made out of flour dough and honey. After the religious rites are over the figure was broken into pieces and eaten by all the participants.

In the Chinese civilization the cult of **Shen-nong** i.e. Divine Farmer is note worthy. The legendary Divine Farmer is supposed to have invented agriculture. A special sacrificial altar was devoted to him in Peking, where the emperor solemnly brought offerings. In early spring every year an important state ceremony was held to mark the first ploughing season. The Chinese Emperor accompanied by prominent dignitaries ploughed a furrow on a sacred plot of the land. The God of the land was known as **She** and peasants offered sacrifices to her as part of spring and autumn rituals.

In the Shintoist religion of Japan the most revered Gods are **Amaterasu** i.e. Sun Goddess and **Inari** i.e. Rice Man, the guardian of farming portrayed with two rice stalks and often together with a Fox.

In the ancient Egyptian religion the God **Osiris** deserves mention. Every year Egyptians celebrated the death and resurrection of **Osiris**. The image of Osiris was made out of sown wheat on the layer of soil that was sprinkled into a special wooden frame. These festivities lasted 18 days and involved ritual ploughing and sowing. Osiris is the direct personification of grain.

In Asia Minor the Mother of the Gods was named **Ma**, **Rhea**, and **Cybele**. Her husband was a young god of fertility named as **Attis**. There is also another myth about the deity of plant life and fertility. God **Telepinus** suddenly disappeared it is stated. Because of his disappearance grass dried up. Fields failed to yield crops. Cattle stopped multiplying. Woman no longer bore children. To put an end to this state of affairs the other gods organized a search for this God. A bee found him and awakened him, so goes the myth.

In Greek religion in the agricultural cult **Demeter**, the goddess was offered with bloodless offerings like fruits, grapes, honey combs and freshly reared sheep wool. These offerings were placed on an altar and covered with olive oil. Numerous such stories, myths and beliefs could be found in various civilizations. The Greek Goddess **Hera** wife of God **Zeus** was apparently a cow goddess. Signs of cow worship were found in excavations. It is heartening to note that Tamils worshipping cow goddess in **Maattu Pongal** times is a practice found in Greek civilization too.

In the Roman religion in the first month of spring March, festivities were held in honour of **Mars**. **Faunus** was the guardian angel of live stocks and he was the god of shepherds. At the end of winter on Feb 17 a jolly holiday **Lupercalis** was celebrated in her honour. **Liber** was the god of wine making. **Saturnus** was the god of sowing and **Jupiter** the god of grapes.

Romans too worshipped gods as Pax (Peace), Spes (Hope), and Virtus (valour), Justitia (Justice), Fortuna (Happiness) etc. If we analyze at the concepts on religion in various cultures we can understand its inherent meanings. Mankind had been striving to be grateful to Nature and agricultural festivities like **Pongal** demonstrate this common urge of human race, which is one and indivisible. While Tamil people hail **Pongalo Pongal** and thank Nature for its kindness, Harvest festivals of various civilizations remind us that our festival has universal appeal.

[Courtesy:New Indian Express:22 January 2005]

MARCHING AHEAD IN TAMIL-BASED COMPUTING

N.Nandhivarman

“The blending of the language and software disciplines led to the emergence of new areas like ‘Language Engineering’, ‘Internationalization and Localization’ and ‘Tamil-based Computing’ says S.Kuppuswami Dean of the Ramanujam School of Mathematics and Computer Sciences of Pondicherry University. The Government of India had declared Tamil as classical language and the evolution in computer technology with increased applications necessitated the adaptation of Tamil in computers. Internet is a mostly used by English knowing peoples in view of the content and presentation being in English. Since Internet has to reach more people the need of the hour is Tamil-based computing. “The unique and unparalleled role of two academicians of Pondicherry University in Tamil based computing has not been recognized by Tamil scholars” opined President of Anna Foundation C.P.Thirunavukarasu former M.P

S.Kuppuswami and V.Prasanna Venkatesan of Pondicherry University developed a prototype of Tamil Computer in the year 1996. Having this prototype as base Government of Tamilnadu had taken initiatives on standardization of keyboard, coding schemes and technical words for realizing the Tamil Computer and constituted a committee. The committee broadly divided the issues related to Tamil Computer into language and computer based issues. The language-based issues mainly focuses on the language to be adopted in computer and the changes in the language elements like character composition, character set, grammar etc. It was decided that there was no change required in the character set and composition. Standardizing the Tamil grammar is still a progressing work.

“The next one is the computer system related issues like keyboard layouts, character coding scheme, domain naming etc. In order to work with different Tamil software, the users have to learn different keyboard layouts and complicate the keying-in process. This is due to the non-availability of standard Tamil keyboard layout. In order to select and standardize a Tamil keyboard layout, the committee decided to categorize the existing Tamil keyboard layouts and analyze them. Tamil keyboard layouts proposed by the various software developers and researchers have been collected and categorized into four groups” explains V.Prasanna Venkatesan.

Keyboard layouts based on the phonemes and frequencies of usage of Tamil characters are classified as Phonetic keyboard layouts. Layouts which follow the Tamil typewriter keyboard are classified as Typewriter-like keyboard layouts. In Romanized keyboard layouts mapping of the Tamil characters to the corresponding English characters is done on transliteration basis. The keyboard layouts which do not fall under the above categories are grouped as others.

An extensive analysis was carried out in three phases on the Tamil keyboard layouts to determine their efficiency for keying-in of Tamil texts selected from various Tamil literatures of different periods. S.Kuppuswami and V.Prasanna Venkatesan have jointly developed benchmarking software to analyze the Tamil keyboard layouts and recommended the results to Government of Tamilnadu, which led to steps being taken for release of the standardized Tamil keyboard layout for Tamil software development.

The UNICODE consortium did standardizing the character-coding scheme but it was commented for the limitations. To overcome this hurdle the duo designed a coding scheme for Tamil based on sorting, storage, and memory and performance constraints. In addition jointly they have developed much Tamil software for

the Tamil usage and users. While two scholars from Pondicherry University have shown the way to Tamil computing there is little interaction between them and Tamil scholars of Pondicherry.

But at the same time Pondicherry's Tamil scholars are realizing that they should not be left behind and recently an effort is being made to introduce them to netizens. And in the forefront of this endeavor is Rasa. Thiagarasan. While the print media nowadays is promoting modern verse an Ezine launched before ten months from Pondicherry had encouraged Tamil writers to compose poems strictly following the grammatical rules and meter. "Since Marabu kavithaigal have become a rare species we decided to promote and preserve them in net world" says, Rasa Thiagarajan editor of the Tamil ezine Pudhucherry that can be viewed at www.pudhucherry.com.

Entirely new breeds of writers have come up in the net world. They started in writing blogs and blossomed into fully talented writers of the day. Especially women could assert their presence by writing in ezines. Puthiya Madhavai from Mumbai, Madhumitha from Chennai, Shailaja from Bangalore, Nirmala Suresh of Kolkatta, Jayanthi Shankar from Singapore are few of the feminine writers who have left their imprint.

Intense debate on Tamil development and Tamil oriented discussions are going on in yahoo groups such as Marathadi, Tamil Ulagam, Santha Vasantham, and Raayar Kapi Klup. The group santha vasantham is debating Marabu illakiyam, which means heritage poetry or traditional poetry.

Professor Anantha Narayanan of Bio Chemistry Department University of Toronto Canada is a scholar known to world by e-zines and e-writings. These trendsetters have now generated interest among the Tamil scholars of Pondicherry. Pulavar Se.Ramalingan brought such scholars under one umbrella. The President of Pudhuvai Tamil Sangam Mannar Mannan launched the first ever e-zine from Pondicherry which

had come out for 10 months and given space for Pondicherry's Tamil scholars to record their inner voice. "We are e-publishing this journal on a non-remunerative basis says, Se.Ramalingan who edits the ezine. The ezine Pudhucherry contains links to various other ezines and tries to introduce everything to everyone. The life histories of Tamil Scholars like Maraimalai Adigal, Deveneya Paavanar, Mahakavi Bharathiar, U.Ve. Swaminatha Iyer finds place in this ezine. The pages of Tamil Virtual University, lists of electronic texts of Project Madurai, Online Tamil lexicon of University of Cologne are given links. The valuable compilation of Anthology of Malaysian Tamil Poetry 1887-1987 is brought to light. The news of the world's first Tamil SMS launched in Singapore by Oli, Singapore's Tamil Radio on 15 th January 2005 with lyricist Vairamuthu participating indicates the direction in which Tamil is heading for. "Sellinam" the Tamil name for mobile software developed by Muthu Nedumaran whose Murasu Email had earlier established him as single man contributing to open source software is also mentioned in its pages. "Though Computer Scholars and Tamil Scholars of Pondicherry are working in isolation with no interconnectivity they are establishing that Pondicherry leads" says Dr. Ira.Thirumurugan of the Tamil Development Independent Initiative.

[Courtesy: New Indian Express: 3rd September 2005]

Kalai maamani POONGODI PARANGUSAM

N.Nandhivarman

Poet's daughter being a Poet is rare, usually such tradition lacks continuity. But the daughter of Late Poet and Parliamentarian Puthuvai Sivam has established her credentials as a Tamil Poet who had won the prestigious kalaimaamani award for the year 2004-2005 for language and literature. Poongodi Parangusam is an educationist who gave up her career to devote more time to her family. But the passion for writing did not dry in her. In most of the cultural meetings one could notice her either delivering speeches or rendering poems.

Poongodi a postgraduate teacher worked in various schools from 1964 to 1996 the last being Government High School Reddiarpalayam. She had other roles to perform at home as mother of three children and wife of an industrialist Parangusam. Her father S.Sivapragasam, known as Puthuvai Sivam was Rajya sabha member in seventies. At that time she wedded Parangusam and her marriage was performed by then Tamil Nadu Education Minister Navalar Nedunchezian. It is no surprise because her father an ardent disciple of Pavendhar Bharathidasan was following the tradition of self-respect marriages. But when it came to the marriages of her children she kept up that tradition in midst of changing times. Her daughter Tamizharasi a dentist married Senthil Kumar a dentist. Her second daughter Ezhilarasi an architect married Sridharan another architect.

"The fore thought to give green signal to these love marriages among persons of same profession shows Poongodi as a modern mother. The most surprising part is her second daughter Ezhilarasi's marriage in a Namboodri family of Kerala, yet she conducted the marriages as self respect marriages only," says Durai Malirayan a poet of many epics.

Having accomplished her family tasks she took voluntary retirement and then she faced many legal battles with the land mafia and undeterred she fights against heavy odds. All these experiences brought out a poet activating her inner voice. She started writing poetry particularly the traditional poetry with meter. “There are many who write modern verses. But to write poetry following the rules of Tamil grammar is a daunting task. And Poongodi does her poetical work with meticulous care and powerful articulation” opines Professor Ilamathi Janakiraman of Pondicherry University.

As recognition of her works the Department Arts and Culture of Pondicherry government had conferred kalaimaamani award for language and literature. Her recent book Vanna Vilakkugal which means colorful lights is a hit among the Tamil audiences. The themes she had chosen to write poetry is varied and remarkable. She stresses the need for Tamils across the globe uniting to uphold their language and culture. Poongodi records her voice on feminism. Her poems include current governmental schemes like the Tank Rehabilitation project executed with European Commission’s assistance. She had written poems on Bharathiar, Bharathidasan, Deveneya Paavanar and Late K.Kamaraj. Among the list of personalities glorified in her poems is the Chief Minister Rangasamy whose simplicity and down to earth approach finds special place in her poetic portrayal.

In the preface to her book Santhapaamani Aranga Natarasan says “To me it seems she is the first Feminine Poet who had rendered a book of Poems composed in accordance with Tamil grammatical rules and meter” Poongodi Parangusam had not even left the India shining campaign of last elections untouched. Her poetic criticism on the un-kept promises of politician’s election after election echoes general public opinion.

As she backs her husband in his dual role as agriculturalist and industrialist, her poems stress the importance of farming sector and the need to bring cheers to the tillers and toilers of soil. “The award given to me has made me conscious of my contributions to society and I am writing on the President A.P.J.Abdul Kalam’s dream of seeing India a Super Power by 2020. It will be my humble token of respects to that great visionary” says Poongodi Parangusam with eyes on future.

Courtesy: New Indian Express dated:27th August 2005]



DANCING PEACOCK FROM SWITZERLAND

N.Nandhivarman

Ms.Mangalanayagi Vasanthakumar visited Pondicherry last weekend as a cultural ambassador from Switzerland, the land of her domicile since 1992 after having been uprooted from the war torn Srilanka. She lost her parents in her early teens and went to Switzerland to live with her brother and married a close relative Vasanthakumar. She is running a dance school in Luzern area of Switzerland. Along with some other dance teachers is keeping the Tamil dance tradition alive in Switzerland.

Rabindranath Tagore lamenting on the decline of Bharathanatyam in India once said “Lord Siva gave his dance to Indonesians and left India only with his ashes”. But like a phoenix out of ashes, this dance regained life in TamilNadu and now as torchbearers of Tamil culture, Indian and Srilankan dancers are nourishing this tradition in whichever country they live.

Anusha (Zug), Mathivathani and Gnanasundari (Zurich), Bhavani (Basel), Chandravathani (Berne), Nimalini (Zug), Anusha (Berne), Fedolina (Winterthur) and Meena (Olter) are the dance teachers teaching dance to girls of Tamil parents and of Inter-country marriages. Every year these teachers are sending their students to participate in the 4-day programme during the Easter holidays, which will be held at Solothurn to select a “ Natya Mayil” which means dancing peacock. Nearly among 700 participants the talented artist will be chosen for the award. Bharathanatyam is the traditional Indian dance form, which is narrated in the 5560 couplets of Bharatha’s Natya Sastra. Slowly this dance instead of being practiced by one and all became confined to temples and devadasis. At that point of time it was known as Sathirattam in Tamil.

During the days of freedom struggle attempts were made to involve women from all strata of society in

practice of this dance. Krishna Iyer, an advocate who used to play women's roles in dramas wrote about Dance and Health. He stressed the need for dancing ones way to sound health. Heeding to his appeal, the daughter of Ganapathy Iyer one Miss Kalanithi staged her performance in 1938, which was considered revolutionary in those days. Sathirattam became known as Bharathanatyam and almost 7 decades are over with such name change and now everyone practices this dance form. It is a sign of liberation of women. And in keeping this dance tradition alive Mangalanayagi is performing a laudable role in Switzerland. This year from Pondicherry Kalaimamani K.Rajamanikam and Thirumudi Arun went to Switzerland to provide live music for the dance competition to select the dancing peacock awardees for 2005. Thirumudi Arun is the last son of Late Thirumudi Sethuraman Chettiar former M.P and a great philanthropist. Both artists came home deeply impressed by the work done by Ms.Mangalanayagi. And Mangalanayagi underwent further refresher course in dance under the guidance of Kalaimamani Rajamanikam. Mangalanayagi originally learnt dance in Jaffna from Padmini Selvendrakumar and underwent 5 year training by Sivajini Srikandarajah. In addition she had finished 3-year diploma course in Fine arts under the Jaffna University.

Her current guru Kalaimamani K.Rajamanikam started his dance school Sangeetha Salangai Natyalaya in the year 1992. His disciples so far had staged 27 arangetrams. Kalaimamani Rajamanikam got training under the illustrious Thanjavor KP Kittappa Pillai and from Annamalai University Isaimamani diploma. He had staged the dance dramas titled Puratchi Kavi, Veera Thaa and Oru Karsilambu Niyayam Ketkirathu based on Silapathigaram epic. Currently he is choreographing the dance drama Arunkalaiselvi Aayi, scripted by Poet Jayarayar, who is known as silver-tongued poet of Pondicherry. This dance drama is about Aayi who laid the foundations for drinking water supply to Pondicherry. So far he had trained around

150 students who got married to grooms from overseas and in Europe he has many disciples of his school.

Sangeetha Salangai Natyalaya of Pondicherry on 17 th July 2005 in a function conferred the title Kalaignanamani on Mangalanayagi. The Speaker of Pondicherry Legislative Assembly M.D.R.Ramachandiran conferred the title and Former Minister K.Lakshminarayanan felicitated the artist. It is recognition for her services in Switzerland, and Pondicherry keeping its cosmopolitan outlook honours talent from whichever part of the globe. While acknowledging the award with humble thanks, Mangalanayagi Director of Salangai Narthanalayam said “Switzerland’s International Institute of Tamil Arts in Zurich is holding trainings and classes in Dance, Music both vocal and instrumental and accords seven grades in selection of artists. There is specified syllabus for every grade and students have to prove their mettle in theory as well as practical. These courses are taught through Tamil medium of instructions” Thus apart from private initiative collective steps to nourish Tamil Dance and Music contributes to the preservation of cultural heritage. Timely warning by Tagore had awakened Tamils and they are keeping their tradition alive.[Courtesy: New Indian Express: July 23 / 2005]

A JOURNEY IN RHYTHM

N.Nandhivarman

Pondicherry based M.Samuel founder of Zion School of Music imparting training to music aspirants had won the prestigious shield of Lady Pap worth's Lyre from The Trinity College of London. Trinity College of London instituted this shield in 1933 to performers who have mastered the art and put up outstanding performances. This shield will have their names engraved on this lyre and passed down through the years to all distinguished performers of all classical musical instruments. Since 1933 various artists throughout the world and 39 artists from India have been honored so far.

M.Samuel had been chosen for the year 2004. He had mastered western cultural music as disciple of Thangadurai Samuel and he can perform in violin and classical guitar. Having a Masters degree in English and Western classical and non classical music Thangadurai Samuel had groomed his disciple and the student had brought fame to his teacher by winning this shield for the year 2004

"Instruments almost identical to what we know as the "guitar" has been popular for at least 5,000 years. Yaazh of the Tamils is the oldest of such string instruments. Yaazhpanam, the current Tamil areas of Srilanka is a land where Yaazh originated. The "guitar" of the western world has derived from ancient mother instruments like Yaazh, which were invented in Srilanka, Iran, Central Asia etc. Earliest evidence of instruments very similar to the westernized guitar appear in ancient Susa carvings and statues recovered from the Iranian Plateau. Guitar is a combination of two words. "Guit", the Sanskrit word "Sangeeta" means "music." The second half of the word "tar" is purely Persian and means "chord" or "string."

So the word "guitar" is half Indian and Iranian in origin, and so is the westernized guitar derived from

ancestral instruments like Yaazh has Tamil origins. Through the passage of times the name moved into the English language and today the guitar is deemed to be western instrument. ” said Dr.Ira.Thirumurugan, who had written the first ever Tamil Grammar on Sinthu Padalgal and a towering scholar of Isaithamizh.

The history of western music has many milestones and epochs. The invading hordes of Vandals, Huns, and Visigoths overran Europe and brought an end to the Roman Empire around 500 A.D. In the next ten centuries the newly emerging Christian Church dominated Europe and the destiny of music, art and literature. Pope Gregory I generally believed to have collected and codified the music known as Gregorian chant the approved music of the Church. Later the University at Notre Dame in Paris created a new kind of music called organum. Secular music was sung all over Europe by the troubadours and trouvères of France.

The Renaissance (ca.1420 to 1600) was a time of great cultural awakening and flowering of the arts, letters, and sciences throughout Europe. With the rise of humanism, sacred music began for the first time to break free of the confines of the Church, and a school of composers trained in the Netherlands mastered the art of polyphony in their settings of sacred music

Then came the Baroque period (ca.1600 to 1750) wherein composers began to rebel against the styles that were prevalent during the High Renaissance. Many monarchies of Europe vied in outdoing each other in pride, pomp and pageantry and employed composers at their courts to churn out music. Composers of that time were able to break new musical ground in creating an entirely new style of music. It was during the early part of the seventeenth century that the genre of opera was first created by a group of composers in Florence, Italy, and the earliest operatic masterpieces were composed by Claudio Monteverdi. The instrumental concert became a staple

of the Baroque era, and found its strongest exponent in the works of the Venetian composer Antonio Vivaldi. Harpsichord music achieved new heights due to the works of such masters as Domenico Scarlatti and others. Dances became formalized into instrumental suites and were composed by virtually all composers of the era. But vocal and choral music still reigned supreme during this age, and culminated in the operas and oratorios of German-born composer George Frideric Handel. So goes on the history of western musical history and the era of instrumental music.

In promoting the western classical and non-conventional music Trinity College of Music , London stands apart. It introduced the first graded music exams 125 years ago and continually developed syllabuses and a system of assessments which supports teaching and learning from the early stages right through to the profession. The Diplomas offered by Trinity College of Music London refines the 21st century musician carrying a wide range of talents. Trinity's revised and updated diploma suite rewards the abilities of these musicians helping to provide clear and logical career paths throughout the music sector. The diplomas recognize the contribution of all those in the professional music world, whether you are a violinist or tabla player, singer or session guitarist, teacher or composer.

Trinity has a long history of examining Music and Drama in India for over 100 years. The early examinations were held in Mumbai Chennai and Delhi but soon spread its wings to other cities. There is a long tradition of examinations at schools, convents and monasteries throughout India. The most popular examinations in Music in India are in Piano but increase in other subjects is visible. In recent years Electronic and Digital Keyboard have become popular. There is also a great demand for Trinity's written theory examinations in Music.

Trinity's higher level qualifications and examinations in music and music education developed over more than 120 years a commitment to conduct relevant and reliable assessments which enable candidates to show the best of what they can do in conditions which are supportive to their endeavors. There are three levels of diploma qualifications - Associate (ATCL), Licentiate (LTCL) and Fellowship (FTCL). Trinity diplomas are fully accredited in England, by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and by the regulatory bodies in Wales and Northern Ireland. It is anticipated that Trinity's teaching diplomas at ATCL and LTCL level may provide steps towards Qualified Teacher Status. M.Samuel qualified himself to the Associate Trinity College of London diploma (ATCL) and won the shield. "Zion school of Music in Pondicherry trains students for these examinations and its services to the cause of music are laudable" opined Feminist writer Malathi Maitreyi. "The recognition for a Pondicherrian in the world of music brings cheers to our ears and his students can aim high taking this as impetus to improve their skills" said Dr.Arimalam Padmanaban of Pondicherry University.

[Courtesy: New Indian Express: 10 th September 2005]

PRIYAN'S PAINTINGS

N.Nandhivarman

La Giaconda is one of the world's most famous paintings. You may blink at this statement. . But if we say Mona Lisa all will know. The painting may be famous but can anyone tell whose portrait Mona Lisa is? Very few knew that the painting of Mona Lisa is that of Mona Lisa Gherarni, the wife of Francesca del Giaconda of Florence. From this one lesson is derived. A painter can make a personality immortal. The artist can leave a deep imprint in peoples mind and if his craft catches people's imagination it will live beyond his lifetime. That is why society encourages students to get involved in hobbies like painting and among those who aspire Priyan Voltaire had gained recognition.

Priyan hails from a family that had liberated itself from the bonds of casteism and regionalism. Yes the parents of this upcoming painter are lovers fostering Tamil and Kerala union. Ramachandran, a freelance journalist is a Marxian and social activist who evaded wedlock for long. But love was powerful and he had to succumb by marrying Alice, a nurse, who is a Keralite. Born to such parents who are fond of their two sons Priyan Voltaire (15) and Russil Vladimir (13) sky was the limit for the affection and love showered by the parents.

Priyan's father tried his best to groom the son in his mould. You could have seen Priyan Voltaire addressing street corner meetings against globalization while he was 12 years along with progressive forces. As age grew, maturity dawned. The boy had started to think independently. Priyan Voltaire in the aftermath of the display of his paintings declared that henceforth the theme of his paintings would be messages against terrorism. His father's influence over him is on the wane. He had become a believer. The father and son are engaged in a serious family debate. The son cites the example of Professor Anthony Flew who after being a proponent of atheism for half a century at his 81-st

age became a believer. Priyan asks his father what is wrong in being a believer.

Priyan says “researcher’s investigation of the DNA had shown that the almost unbelievable complexity of the arrangements, which are needed to produce life, and this, makes him a believer.” The debate in the family though unconnected resembles the debate in America by a group that is called intelligent design. More than 360 biologists in America had signed a joint memorandum challenging evolution and this had set the tone to admire the intelligent design of human race, which became the name of the group. Priyan’s father in desperation writes in his usual column in a local weekly “I went to him and asked why we perceive god in human form and is it correct to impose human form advocacy on other species?” This question may sound as being addressed to religious people, but he argues before his son indirectly, and fails to convince him. There is one lesson in this episode. No ideology by Gnostics or agnostics could be imposed on any thinking human being. Days have gone when sons accepted their father’s version as gospel. That does not mean indiscipline in family. It means we are in an age of enlightenment and knowledge explosion where every concept on earth will face scrutiny and inward debate among humans.

Priyan, the upcoming artist dutifully recognizes the teachers who taught him painting “ Maniccam my teacher gave me requisite training. While I was in 1 st standard I joined Jawahar Bal Bhavan run by Pondicherry Government and gained efficiency by the training imparted there. Having learnt for 5 years I got the Best Child Award for Creativity in the year 1999. Then I joined Saint Joseph Art Academy and enriched my experience under the guidance of drawing masters Sampath, Nice, Subburayan etc. At present under the guidance of Rajaram, Lecturer in the Bharathiar Palkalai Koodam, Priyan continues his training towards perfection.

“I sent my painting to the Vishwakala Dharshini at Rajamundry in Andhra Pradesh for an exhibition. My painting won the second national level award. Emboldened by these responses, my parents advised me to hold an exhibition of my paintings at Kamban Kalai Arangam. The Progressive writer Association too had lauded my paintings. So far I had drawn more than 250 paintings”, Priyan speaks with ease and glitter in his eyes. It is my desire to awaken the people’s consciousness to combat terrorism and to light the candle of Peace at all homes on earth says Priyan.

Priyan Voltaire had also won many prizes for his oratorical skills. One thing is certain, the product of liberal progressive minded parents Priyan grows intellectually on his own and the milieu in the family is conducive for cultivating agreeing to disagree concept, the very essential ingredient of democracy at a family soil.

[Courtesy: New Indian Express:24 th September 2005]

NARAYANA GURU AND THE TAMIL SOIL

N.Nandhivarman

Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore in 1921 visited Narayana Guru and said, "During my travels throughout the world, I have had the good fortune to come in contact with several saints and maharishis. But I have frankly to admit that I have never come across one who is spiritually greater than Swami Narayana Guru or a person who is at par with him in spiritual attainment." To attain such spiritual status in the evaluation of Tagore, Narayana Guru wandered in Tamil soil and had been to Pondicherry, which stands proven by his Tamil devotional poems on Vedhapuriswarar Temple of Pondicherry.

Narayana Guru left his home and his forays into Tamil soil inspired him to write devotional songs in Tamil, thus his quest gave Tamil literature few outstanding books. The most outstanding work in Tamil is "Thevara Pathikankal" Each pathiham is composed of ten songs. "The poem is unique for its devotional appeal, philosophical greatness, literary beauty as well as musical style" opines Suresh Kumar Pillai." Thevara Pathikankal" is believed to have been written in 1887 on the occasion of renovation of a Nayanar temple near Arumanoor. "Thevara pathikangal "has been recently published by Dr. T. Bhaskaran of the Malayalam Department of the Kerala University making it easier for research scholars

Narayana Guru had lived in Chidambaram which stands proven by his Chidambarastakam in Sanskrit believed to have been written along the style of Adi Sankaracharya's Lingastakam. This is composed of 8 songs of four lines each like Venba meter in Tamil. Though it is written in Sanskrit, the poem is extremely popular.

Narayana Guru knew Tamil even in his boyhood days. Before going to Marutvamalai and even after settling down in Aruvipuram, he was in close contact with

several Tamil mutts and adheenams in Tamilnadu like Karaikudy, Madurai, Kumbakonam and Tiruchendur. Narayana Guru was very thorough with Sivapuranam and all the works of Pattanathu Pillayar, Manicka Vachakar, Appar, Sundaramurti, and Tirujnana Sambantar. He even translated part of Tiruvalluvar's TiruKural. "Vallalar Ramalinga Swamikal an advocate of integral vision and social equality was like an elder brother to Narayana Guru. Narayana Guru was not in the habit of writing compositions in his own hand. He always sung them for his devotees and only very few of such compositions were recorded by people, among these are three Tamil works, which have been recovered from the fast disappearing records of those days. To understand the Malayalam compositions of Narayana Guru, one should have a fairly good familiarity with the myths and legends popularly sung in Tamilnadu and also should know some of the basic terms used by the followers of Saiva Siddhanta .says Dr.S.Omana in his doctoral thesis to the University of Kerala.

It was in such wanderings Narayana Guru visited Pondicherry, Chidambaram and Vadalur. He was attracted by Vallalar Ramalinga Samy. Thus Pondicherry's Vedhapurideaswarar was immortalized by his poetic works and Chidambarastakam placed in Sanskrit the greatness of Chidambaram.

It is generally believed that the Guru had his awakening during his solitary penance in the cave of Marutvamalai. His reference of mystical experiences given in the Atmopadesa Satakam must have direct bearing on what he had experienced in Marutvamalai. "The great awakening bestowed upon the Guru an all-inclusive vision of unity. A man who is seeing the one Absolute that transcends the phenomenal may feel tempted to withdraw himself from the maddening crowd of humanity into the silence of a cloister. But Narayana Guru experienced the vision of unity in a very different manner. The hunger of a simple villager who came to visit him became a matter of greater

concern to him than theological disputation or the establishment of a new religion. He began to live in a present which was the result of an endless and pure experience of the past and the most far-reaching expectation of the future. The result was that his duties became clear as daylight to him at every step. Philanthropy became a natural hobby to him. Philosophy gave his actions a detached motive, and poetry gave him the means of natural expression. His life and ambitions were simplified and the foundations of a career of benevolence and prosperity were laid in his personality” says Dr.S.Omana. Pondicherry has yet to awaken to the Narayana Guru’s connection. Many saints and seers have set their foot here but few are known and let the history stand corrected recording every great mans visit.

Courtesy: New Indian Express: 13 th August 2005]

SINGAPORE SURGES AHEAD

N.Nandhi Varman

Role of Tamils in history of Singapore

“The second successful six year term of unanimous choice for President Sellappan Ramanathan of Singapore is a silent revolution. It denotes recognition could be earned by constitutional means by peace loving Tamils anywhere in the world” said Director of Pondicherry Institute of Linguistics and Culture Dr.Marudhanayagam. Pondicherry has many a contact with Singapore. The handloom weavers of Muthialpet for long had been exporting to Singapore. Pe.Tha.Rasan of Tirumalairayanpattinam of Karaikal region went to Singapore made a fortune and participated in that country’s politics. He wrote a monumental book Singaporin Varalatril Vazhukinra Thamizhargal. Pondicherry Chief Minister N.Rangasamy had lauded this book as “a fruit of many years toil and hard research “



Chinese named Singapore as Pu-luo-chung, which meant "island at the end of a peninsula" in third century. Javanese language book 'Nagarakretagama' of 1365 calls it as Temasek, or Sea town. Vietnamese

source for that name is there. But from 14th century Singapuram which means Lion City is commonly used indicating the predominance of Tamil settlers.

On 29 January 1819 Sir Stamford Raffles, Lieutenant-Governor of Bencoolen landed in the island to establish a trading station at the southern tip of the Malay Peninsula after having surveyed other nearby islands. Along with him came Narayana Pillai and Pe.Tha.Rasan records the contribution of Narayana Pillai in building of Singapore. Singapore proved to be a prized settlement.

The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 made Singapore a major port of call for ships navigating between Europe and East Asia. Rubber planting, especially after the 1870s made Singapore the main exporter for rubber in the world. At the end of the 19th century Singapore experienced unprecedented prosperity with eightfold trade expansion between 1873 and 1913. This prosperity attracted immigrants from countries around. The population grew to 80,792 by 1860 with Chinese 61.9 per cent the Malays and Indians 13.5 and 16.05 per cent respectively; and others, including the Europeans, 8.5 per cent.

Dravidian Movements impact on Singapore

In that island nation the unity of the multi ethnic society did not come over night. It had been a long and strenuous period with visionaries shaping the destiny of that nation. Its Union with Malaya, subsequent independent nationhood, all was passing phases. In that phase the political movements of Tamil Nadu played an important role. Periyar visited Malaya in 1929 to inaugurate Malaya Tamil Congress. In later years after he parted company with Congress, Singapore Dravida Kazhagam and subsequently Singapore Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam came up as independent outfits. They were not extensions of the Tamil Nadu based political outfits. They were independent parties dedicated to the country and they never had extra territorial ambitions. Leaders like

Anna advised Tamils to be loyal to the country of settlement. This mature guidance led to amalgamation of Tamils in that country's national mainstream. Pe.Tha.Rasan was the General Secretary of Singapore Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam. In his time even in Ceylon there was a separate Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam unit with A.S Manavaithambi as General Secretary, so was the case of Malaysia Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam. They waning of the influence of Indian nationalists, communists and Dravidian movement in the South East Asian countries where Tamils went as settlers created a vacuum which was occupied by militancy in Srilanka, but in Malaya and Singapore though these parties lost relevance, the ground they prepared helped Tamils gaining national identity, Tamil language getting official language status, and now Tamil heading a multi ethnic country like Singapore.

As settlers from Europe amalgamated into American society Tamils and Indians became Singaporeans and Malaysians. Peace prevails in a multi linguistic and ethnic country unlike other places of turmoil. Immediately after independence doubts over its very survival were raised in international media. The pressing issues were unemployment, housing, and education, lack of natural resources and lack of land.

Singapore lacked national unity among most of the population, with people still attached to their countries of origin. Chinese identifying as being from China, Indians from India and so on rather than being citizens of Singapore. Singapore dealt with each of these problems separately.

Its leaders decided that the population would need to be fluent in English and English was made the medium of education for all schools. Education, at least for primary schooling was made compulsory.

The education system was designed to be rigorous and intensive, with emphasis on immediately practical, rather than intellectual, applications, such as on the

technical sciences as opposed to political discussion or philosophy.

A large portion, around one-fifth of Singapore's budget was devoted to education to facilitate a large and competent work force upon graduation.

Language Policy Evolution in Tamil Nadu and Singapore

It is pertinent to note that DMK founder C.N. Annadurai's visit to Singapore and Malaysia in 1965 was an eye opener to the leader who later introduced the two language formula without diluting the importance of English. His visit and meeting with Lee Kuan Yew played an influential role in his later day policy perceptions on language as Tamil Nadu Chief Minister.

The leadership of Lee Kuan Yew achieved a miracle. After dominating political scene for longest period in office now Lee is looking back at his past policies in a mode of introspection.

In spite of all that Lee still has soft corner for his mother tongue. Lee expressed concern about the declining proficiency of Mandarin among younger Singaporeans. In one of his parliamentary speeches, he said: "Singaporeans must learn to juggle English and Mandarin".

Subsequently, he launched a television program in January 2005, in an attempt to attract young viewers to learn Mandarin. In June 2005, Lee published a book, *Keeping My Mandarin Alive*, documenting his decades of effort to master Mandarin, a language which he said he had to re-learn due to disuse.

The racial unity was fostered well during Lee Kuan Yew's regime.



TAMIL PRESIDENT OF SINGAPORE

S.R.Nathan



Now an ethnic Tamil had been chosen for a second term. Mr. Sellapan Rama Nathan received a walkover on nomination Day i.e. 18 August 1999 for his first Presidential election. The Presidential Elections Committee said in the second Presidential

election in August 18 2005 that Mr. Nathan has all the credentials for the office. "Not only is Mr. Nathan well regarded and respected for his public service, he is also a man of integrity, good character and reputation". The Tamil becoming unopposed again as President of Singapore has generated lot of interest in Pondicherry and The students of Dr.Ambedkar Law college launched a signature campaign in various colleges to urge Pondicherry University to confer Honorary doctorate on S.R.Nathan citing the precedent of Maldives President getting doctorate from

Pondicherry University at an earlier period. The author of the book that records all the services of Tamils in nation building of Singapore Pe.Tha.Rasan after 45 years in Singapore is back to Karaikal and presides over Kamban Kazhagam of Karaikal. It is irony of fate.

[Courtesy: New Indian Express 17.09.2005]

HISTORICAL ATLAS OF SOUTH INDIA

N.Nandhivarman

A partnership in research yields good results. At present “ The Department of Epigraphy and Archaeology of the Tamil University Thanjavur and The Laboratory of Geomatics and Applied Informatics of the French Institute Pondicherry have joined together to develop and deploy a digital Atlas of South India on the internet accessible to everyone, presenting the political, social and cultural and all inclusive history of South India through a combination of maps, illustrations, texts and geographical information” said Dr.Y.Subburayalu, Coordinator of the unique project on South India.

Tamil University Thanjavur for past decade had been collecting each and every bit of information, which forms the basic data. It joined hands with the Institut Franciase de Pondicherry under the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs for incorporating all these data into the Atlas from 2000 and in four years covered lot of ground. In the meanwhile Mahatma Gandhi University of Kottayam, Mangalore University and Hyderabad University have joined as new partners. Because already for decades lot of basic data had been collected and readily available in Tamil Nadu and Kerala, the first phase of the project covers the entire two states. But since Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka entered late into the fray they are currently working on two pilot projects only to gain momentum soon.

Using the maps by Survey of India as base maps and improving upon them with maps provided by satellite pictures the Historical Atlas of South India is being prepared. The satellite imagery will be in the background and these maps will have 30 layers of information packed to suit the needs of every scholar's choice.

The Geomatics and Applied Informatics Laboratory of the French Institute Pondicherry that plays a pivotal

role is a laboratory that specializes in the acquisition, management, modeling and analysis of spatial information on the Indian sub-continent with the aim to address scientific queries.

“The contribution of the laboratory to the research projects is based on expertise in the development of Geographic Information Systems and analysis of satellite remote sensing data and favours a multi-disciplinary and integrative approach. Recently, the laboratory was responsible for launching a new area of activity pertaining to the development of web-browser based applications for the dissemination of scientific results through CD-ROMs and the web” according to informed sources.

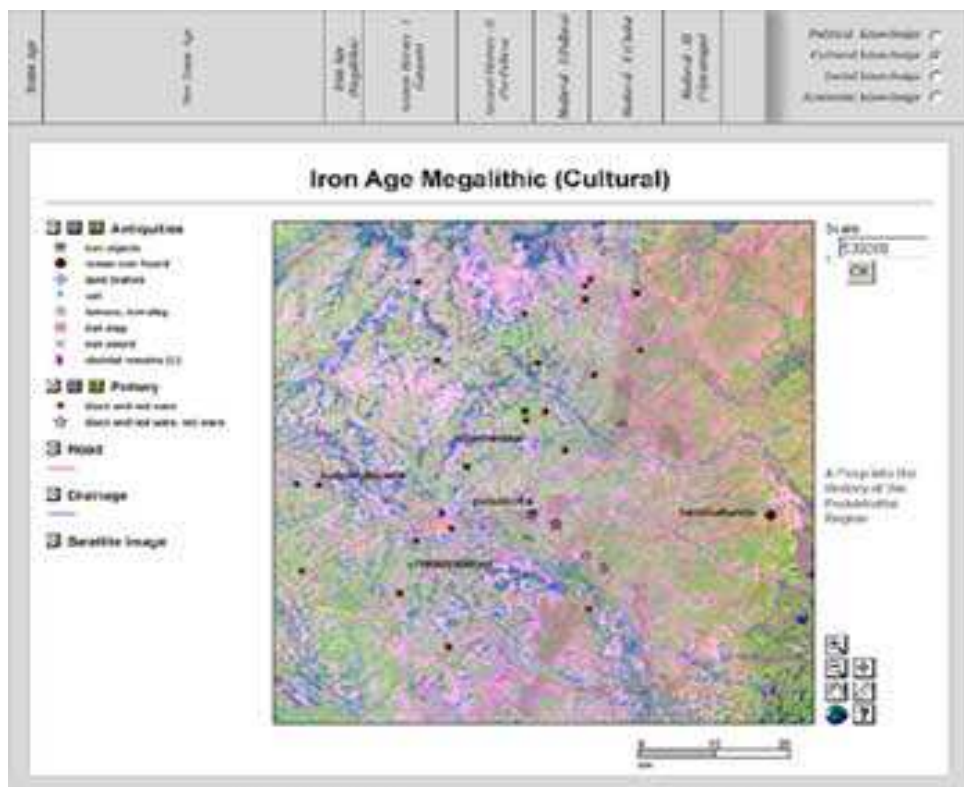


Image 2

Image 3

Looking at the other side of the world we find that United Nations realized the need for a marriage of technology and history when it accepted in 1974 a new map prepared for the world by Arno Peters, a German scholar. Peter's map shows countries in their respective sizes and is based on Peter's decimal grid,

which divided the surface of the earth into hundred longitudinal fields of equal width and hundred latitudinal fields of equal height. Because much before this map was accepted the Atlases based on Mercator maps showed Greenland and Scandinavia to be bigger than India. Russia appeared bigger than entire continent of Africa. It seemed that Europe occupied more areas than South America. “These are not due to limitations of mathematics, but a deliberate attempt to show Colonial Europe as bigger than non-European world” opines Vishal Sharma. Hence to rectify this anomaly Peter’s projections came to be accepted by United Nations. The Historical Atlas of South India too is an attempt to update knowledge keeping room to add fresh every new information as and when found. Thus it is an attempt to keep perfection and precision.

Dating back to 5 lakh years and covering the Stone Age up to 10,000 years ago the Atlas travels down and the New Stone Age between 3000 to 4000 years ago. It covers the metal age and pre-historical period of 1600 A.D and thus Atlas provides every information in a nutshell. Tamil University Thanjavur, which studied extensively, and intensively Pudukottai area have established the contributions of Jains to the iconography of Tamils. The well built tank irrigation system of Pudukottai region with inscriptions found in the sluices of the tanks yielded lot of information on irrigation and land administration. This information is fed into the Atlas.

The Atlas is arranged in a time line of eight broad periods. It covers four major themes such as Political, Social, Economical and Cultural. Textual information is provided in link files. One can access these at <http://www.ifpindia.org>

Apart from the Atlas prepared by one of its divisions, The French Institute [IFP] has an extremely rare collection of photographs dating back to 1956. This assorted collection consists of about 1,23,000 black and white photographs and 5500 color films and slides

focusing on South Indian religious art and iconography including temple views, stone and bronze statues, paintings, architectural motifs, pre-historic cave rock paintings, palaces, jewelry etc. The Department of Indology at the IFP has the unique distinction of being a meeting place for the exchange of scientific thoughts and ideas between Western Indologists on the one hand and traditional Indian scholars on the other. The Department houses an impressive collection of 10000 bundles of manuscripts and photographs of manuscripts on Saivasiddhanta along with 1, 30,000 photographs of temples and sculptures on religious art in South India “In its vast centralized air-conditioned library from where one can see the Bay of Bengal it is surprising that local Tamil magazines and English news papers etc are not be found” commented a social activist. Researching the past must reach the present society and today’s news is tomorrow’s history.

[Courtesy: New Indian Express dated: 16th July 2005]

The Citadel of Saiva Siddhartha and Ceylonese Scholars

N.Nandhivarman

The French India had attracted steady stream of scholars, though the names of Aurobindo and Bharathiar are popular, still there remain many who have to come to light. The Ceylonese connections to Pondicherry and the scholars of Saiva Siddhantha who landed here in pursuit of knowledge is one field that has to be researched further. Srilanka was then known as Ceylon and from Jafna Pandit Thenkovai S.Kandiah Pillai landed in Pondicherry and edited a weekly on Saiva Siddhantha. "Vittagam" which means the mind of the seed brought out for 3 years from 30.11.1933 was priced "one anna" which carried the title in French along with Tamil. Apart from the philosophical editorials, which formed a major part of the 8 page weekly publication, there is much news about the socio political situation of those times.

The Assembly of French India known as Conseil General was inaugurated on 25.11.1933 around 4 PM in the Municipal buildings amidst huge attendance by people. The French Governor George Bourret in his inaugural speech lamented at the lack of adequate education to the children from 6 to 13 years and urged the members of the assembly to improve the infrastructure of school education. He expressed grave concern over the total neglect of Tamils in learning their mother tongue and in imparting education to their children in Tamil. George Bourret stressed that Tamil medium of instruction must be made compulsorily and higher education in Tamil must be improved. He felt that degrees should be conferred on students of Tamil medium on par with those who learn French. He also stressed the need to encourage private educational institutions. "The foresight of the French Governor is laudable and his advice is applicable even for present days" opines Dr.Ira.Thirumurugan of Tamil

Development Action Group, a private initiative of Tamil scholars in the Union Territory.

After the French governor's speech election to the new assembly members took place. Advocate Chellan Naicker was chosen President. Mr.Thiagaraja Pillai of Karaikal and Mr. Sadhu Charan Mukkerjee of Chandranagore were elected as Vice Presidents. Mr. Balasubramania Pillai, Advocate Perumal Naicker and Selvarasu Chettiar were chosen as Secretaries. Mr.Balasubramania Pillai, Mr. Thanaraja Pillai, Mr. Yubert de Rozario, Mr.Henry Gaebler, Mr. Gnanou Thiagou, Mr. Joseph Laporte, Mr. Ramachandra Naicker, Mr. Sambasivam Chettiar, Mr. Veera Pillai were chosen members of the Economic Committee. "Vittagam" apart from detailing this historical event also places on record that a Report of the Commission on Colonies (Rapport de la commission coloniale) was tabled in the assembly by Mr. Joseph Laporte.

This journal propagated the Thirumoolar School of Yoga. Thirumoolar it was believed lived for 3000 years and wrote one poem every year, which is called as "Thirumoolam" These treatises were focus of scholarly debate of those days when people felt that yoga is a way to gain longer life on earth. English bard Mathew Arnold wrote the poem Scholar gypsy in which he said gypsies possessed the knowledge to live beyond 200 or 300 years. Saint Vallalar believed that human body could transform into a body of light and vanish in the air and get lost in the vacuum. "Vittagam" and its writers were of the view that with the body they can attain divinity and stated that it was the True Attainment of Salvation. "Unmai Mukhthi Nilai" written by Pandit Thenkovai S.Kandiah Pillai expounds this theory in detail.

The journal Vittagam went to India (British), Burma and Ceylon. The annual subscription was rupees 3, while for Malaya, Singapore and Saigon the annual rate was Rupees 4. A letter from a Teacher of Saint Johns College Jafna dated 18.1.1934 the reader

S.G.Arulanandha said “Your articles are very stimulating of thought and action. I am a fervent Christian and you are to me interpreting truly the life of my lord and Master Jesus.” In every week from the letters to the editor published it becomes clear that this magazine left a deep imprint in Ceylon, Tamil Nadu, Malaya, Saigon and Burma.

The publisher of this philosophical weekly Mr.R.Nagaratnam was among the few nationalists who were with Aurobindo Ghosh in his initial years of the stay in Pondicherry. During the year 1923 the inmates of Ashram as published by M.P.Pandit in the book “Champaklal Treasures” are Rajangam, Tirupati, Khitish, Nalinda, Satyen, Kanai, Bejoy, Purani and Nagaratnam (a local devotee). Also in the picture are Punamchand, Champaben, Mrs.Kothandaraman, Mr.Kothandaraman, Champaklal, Moni, Amrita and Manmohan. Late R.Nagaratnam Pillai born in 9.05.1899 and passed away on 26.11.1992 in his 93rd year.

The nationalist who went on secret missions to bring freedom fighters to Pondicherry and who offered asylum in his house was detained by the British Police at Tindivanam and was in prison for 15 days from 25.12.1925. He headed an agency R.Nagarathinam Pillai and Brother importing Austin and Ford Cars in French India. Also he was a Correspondent for Illustrated Weekly of India in French India and agent for Dinamani and Indian Express. Vittagam Press that brought out many books from its premises situated at 2 & 4 Ambalathadum Iyer Madam Street. Those houses had been a place frequented by Mahakavi Bharathiar, Lalalajpat Rai, Chitaranjan Das, V.V.S.Iyer, Neelakanta Brahmachari, Suthanandha Bharathiar, Maraimalai Adigal and many scholars of Saiva Siddantha School.” The Saivite School and scholars of that ideology with various “siddhar peedams” around Pondicherry are fresh areas for further research” opines Dr.N.Sengamala Thayar, the daughter of

R.Nagaratnam currently in charge of Bharathiar Museum at Pondicherry.



1923: Inmates of the Ashram

Top: Rajangam, Tirupati,* Khitish,* Nolinida, Satyen,* Kanai,* Bejoy,*
Purani* and Nagaratnam (a local devotee)
Centre: Punamchand,* Champaben, Mrs. Kodandaraman, Mr. Kodandaraman
Bottom: Champaklal, Moni,* Amrita,* Manmohan.

[Courtesy: New Indian Express dated: 27th November 2004]

MOTHER TONGUE AS MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION:

N.Nandhivarman

If anyone says, “I will not speak English” in England he or she won’t, say it in English. They will say “Me na vyn cows sawsnak”. Who are these people? They were the speakers of Cornish, a language of Cornwall England, which became extinct in 1777. A Primary school in Pondicherry Chief Minister’s constituency “Periyavar Swaminathan Ninaivu Palli” has a motto. Study English but not Study in English. Both these language speakers by such assertions are for one goal. Preserving their native tongues.

The first case is for revival of Cornish language, in which they are showing signs of achievement. Second case is an experiment to impart primary education in mother tongue fearing disappearance of Tamil in the thinking process and expressions.

United States of America annexed Hawaii in 1898 and banned teaching of Hawaiian in schools. The Anglicization of education led to almost extinction of Hawaiian language. So to revive their mother tongue as medium of instruction Hawaiians created in 1983 “Aha Punana Leo” which means language nest.

Aha Punana Leo was created to reintroduce their native language throughout the state including its public schools. Hawaiian language pre schools were opened in 1984 followed by secondary schools. By 1999 the first graduates in Hawaiian language came out of their colleges.

This is a success story at the revival of a mother tongue. Linguists all over believe that out of 6120 languages spoken in the world 3400 will disappear by 2100. Many languages had become extinct. Manx, the language of Isles of Man disappeared in 1974 when its last speaker breathed his last. In the Caucasus region

the death of a farmer in 1992 resulted in the death of Ubykh language.

UNESCO had prepared a Red Book on Endangered Languages and to promote multilingualism had been celebrating International Mother Language Day on February 21st every year from 2000. UNESCO adopted Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, which “encourages international community to take steps to protect intangible heritage, including languages, in the same way natural and cultural treasures of tangible heritage are protected”. This is the way wind is blowing globally.

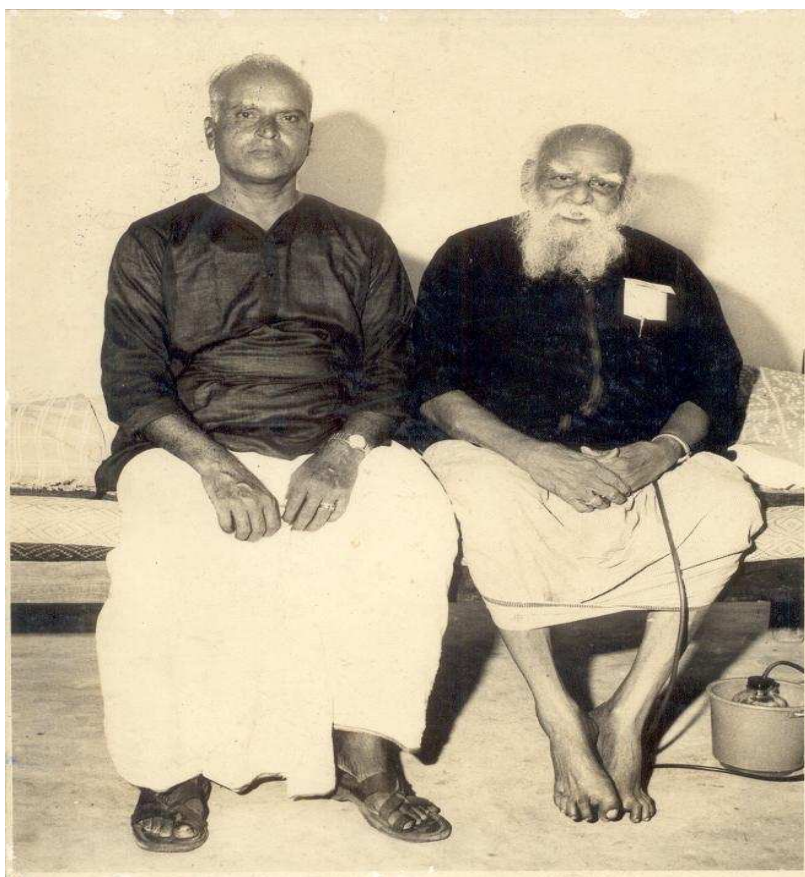
Every mother tongue must be preserved seems to be the driving force for intellectual growth of humanity. In a rare coincidence, in spite of being classical language efforts are needed to revive the Tamil medium of instruction, for fear of extinction of Tamil in everyday usage. And the primary school situated in the Chief Minister’s constituency is a school with a difference.

They teach Spoken English to nourish the proficiency of English language but at the same time want to stimulate thinking process in Tamil.

To commemorate the memory of Late Swaminathan who was the President of Dravida Kazhagam in Pondicherry state during seventies, his son S.Nedunchezian had donated land to Senthamizh Trust for starting this school.

N.M. Thamizhmani who runs the Trust ran from pillar to post at every step to cross hurdles and raised the finances to build this school.

With the approval of the Government of Pondicherry this school is conducting classes in PRE-KG, LKG, and UKG and from 1 st to 4 th standards.



A tiny baby Ashwini walks out of a class, we ask her “In which class you are studying? She replies I am doing “Arumbu” which means pre-kinder garden. Lower Kinder garden (LKG) class is named as Mottu, UKG is known as Malar. The children call the Head Mistress as Amma, teachers as Akka and Annan. The star performer of the school Nilavarasi who studied from pre kg here and now in IV th standard states that “Our teachers never used cane, never threatened us, we are brought up with love and care”. Nilavarasi now is the star dancer of the school that teaches Music, Dance, Painting and Computers too. She and all the children are proud of their school. It is surprising that amidst craze for English education in the mushrooming private primary schools, parents are willing to send their children to a Tamil medium primary school. If the history of education in Pondicherry is written from the days of French many institutions have come up and grown with the help of philanthropists. This Tamil Primary School is another example of the public contribution in education. It is

surprising to find these children doing well in spoken English classes, and justifying their motto “Study English but not Study in English”. They are proficient in both languages. A pre-kg student is able to recite 30” Thirukural “stanzas with ease.

Looking to America, the speakers of 540 Native American languages admit that language is essential for perseverance of a culture of the past generations and that culture in turn is important to the future of native peoples. Many cultures and languages are racing with times to preserve their languages. Washington Post publishes a story (31.3.2003) about Northwest Tribe Struggles to Revive Its Language. Indian Country Today report (23.10.2002) speaks about a Meeting to preserve the Lakota language. Squeamish Nation puts together CD-ROM to teach its language. Native Language Institute works to stave off decline of traditional tongues. Linguist begins effort to preserve native Alaskan language. Christian Science Monitor story (11.6.2002) speaks about Tribal immersion schools rescuing language and culture. Research is on the Effects of Including Native Language and Culture in the Schools.

You will be surprised at the attempts made at preserving the 540 native languages in America where we all think English is the undisputed monarch. Like preservation of flora and fauna, preservation of all languages is the goal of human race now. None wants uniformity but crave for unity amidst diversity. If we clone all human races as one alike, then the world will become the asylum of the mad. The Periyavar Swaminathan Memorial School is a living testimony for such struggle to preserve the native tongue and Senthamizh Trust led by N.M.Thamizh Mani shows the aspirations of miniscule sections of society who are torchbearers of the Gandhian concept to impart education in one’s mother tongue.

[Courtesy: New Indian Express dated: 18th September 2004]

ALL ROADS GO DUTCH

N.Nandhivarman

If you go to Old Delhi you will be shocked by its irregular street pattern but in New Delhi you will appreciate the concept of planned city. In old Pondicherry you can see straight roads but in the suburban areas in post independence era all that symmetry of streets is lost. How could such a legacy be thrown to winds? There is a saying in Pondicherry.

In Tamil they say “Veethi Azhagu undu, Neethi Azhagu illai”. Veethi Azhagu means beauty of the streets. Who were the people who laid down the blueprint for straight streets in Pondicherry? Some may think it is local people. Some believe it is French. “No, it is the work of the Dutch,” says Jean Deloche, Historian based at the Ecole Francaise d’Extreme Orient at Pondicherry.

“Some Indian scholars consider that the town was built according to the principles of the ancient Hindu treatises or architecture, particularly the Shilpa Sastra. French historians, on the other hand, feel that the plan should be considered as an achievement of French mind.

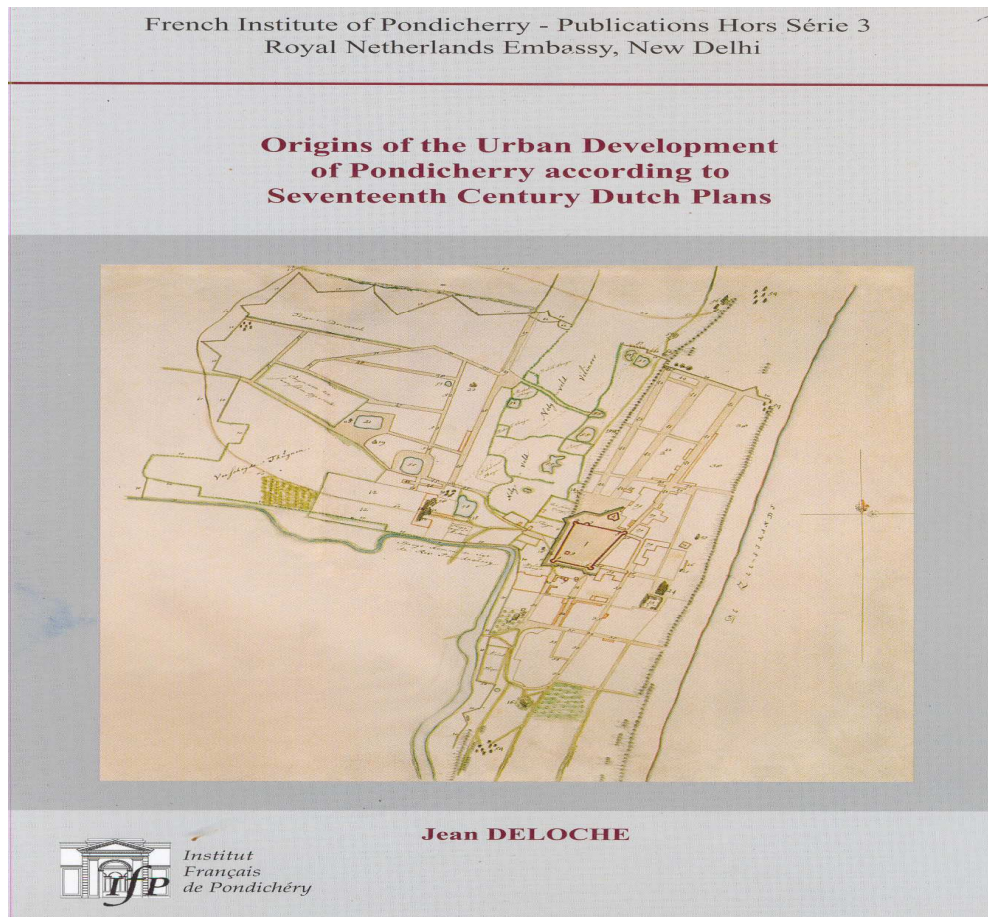
In fact, the Dutch plans of Pondicherry preserved at the National Archives at The Hague show that the orthogonal street pattern of the town is a creation of the Dutch.

The plans of 1693 show that, in Francois Martin’s time, the streets or lanes were following an irregular pattern, without any shape or symmetry, whereas in the plans drafted in 1694, during the Dutch occupation, one finds the design of a large new town, with a very regular geometric lay out, rectangular blocks of houses, separated by straight streets, intersecting at right angles.

This great urban project of the Dutch company was adopted by the French who systematically carried out

the extensive straightening out of streets into a planned grid, during the first half of the 18th century” This is how Jean Deloche summarizes the contents of his book published in 2004 with 11 figures and 6 plates.

“Origins of the Urban Development of Pondicherry according to 17th Century Dutch Plans” is a masterpiece placing truth in its right place. People must appreciate the French Institution here and the French author who did not falter in placing truth above all.



How did Pondicherry look like in 1700 A.D. “Like an active hive developing its honeycomb, the town extended in a grid pattern along the left bank of the coastal river Uppar, to the north west of its citadel which was still no more than a small rectangular fort, Fort Barlong” This is how Professor M.Bourdart of the

Lysee Francaise narrates in his book “18 th century Pondicherry” published in 1992.

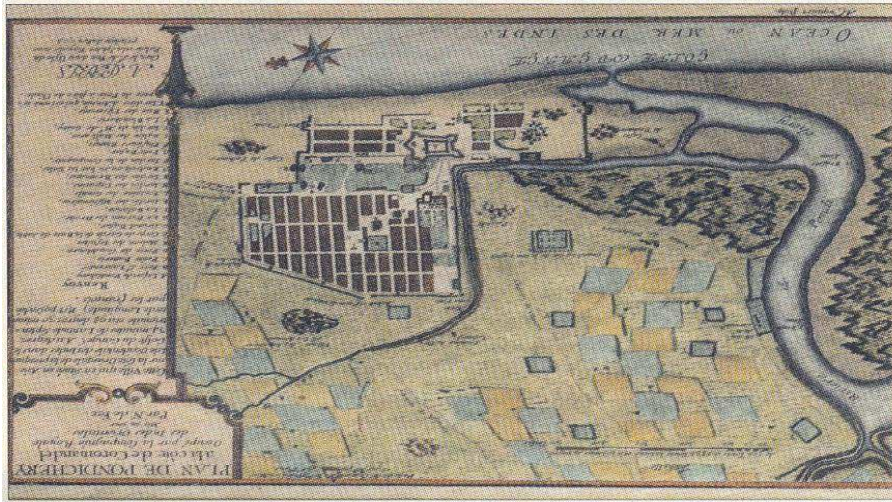
There is another map engraved as “Map of Pondicherry” published by Nicholas de Fer in Paris in the year 1705. There is another plan of Pondicherry of 1741, which depicts Pondicherry, a year before the arrival of Dupliex.

“On this excellent plan are already shown the principal monuments of the town which was riveted to the Indian soil by the star shaped bolt of its fort, Fort Louis. The town’s appearance was to alter but little with time, at least as regards its outer contours.

The fortifications would be leveled and would give place to the boulevards that today encircle the town.”



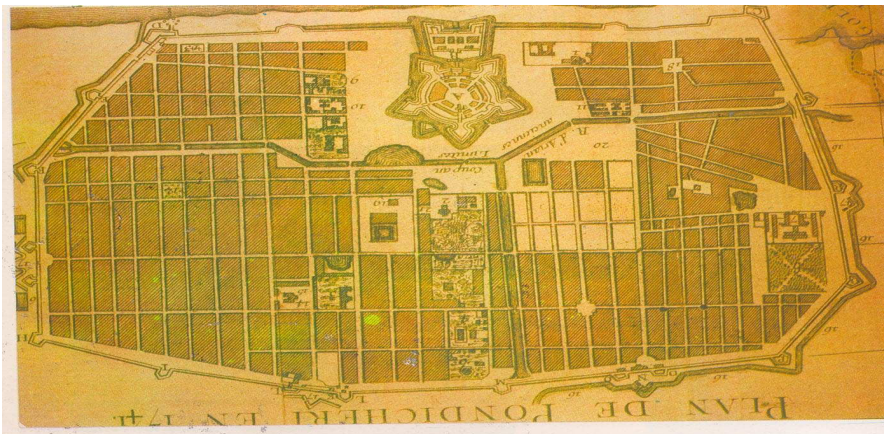
Well there are other evidences of that hoary past. One is the watercolor map of 1750 and the other is drawing of. Le Gentil who authored “Voyage dans les mers de l’inde, and visited Pondicherry twice in 1761 and 1769.



The Dutch evidences had thrown more light on the History of Pondicherry's Urban Development. The Plan of the fortress and town "Poedechery" as it is currently being built on 20 th November 1694, available with Dutch Museum not only gives authentic version of the scene of those days but also spells Pudhucherri, the correct Tamil name instead of the corrupted version of Pondicherry.

In his book "City Planning and Architecture in Pondicherry" P.Pichard thinks that the French adapted "their plan to the natural conditions of the littoral.

This was possible because of the straight coast line was a very strong feature of the site and has from the beginning, determined the general orientation of the buildings and the direction of the streets, behind the dune, the low marshy lands and their outlet, running parallel to the seashore, increased this trend."



Ron van Oers is of the opinion that Dutch colonial settlements were built on a “Strict geometrical design to subdivide the usable area into building plots. All had a common image of being neat and well organized.” On the orthogonal street model applied in Pondicherry he says Dutch preferred this pattern since” it was symbolic of an ordered, well managed society, hierarchical but democratic, it was emblematic for the hard working god fearing Dutch Calvinists”

“French appropriated this great design and that the extensive straightening out of the streets into a planned grid, systematically carried out by their governors in the first half of the 18 th century, was therefore the extension of the existing Dutch orthogonal pattern into the rest of the town” Says Historian Jean Deloche who lives in Pondicherry . A great scholar who loves Tamil lives here unknown to fellow Tamils and he humbly refuses to get photographed because he wants his works to speak for ages to come. The billion dollar question is “If French could appropriate whatever good plans of the Dutch and beautify Pondicherry, who misled and buried such a planned legacy in the post independence era while sub urban colonies mushroomed here?” Let soul search begin.

[Courtesy: New Indian Express dated: 13th November 2004]

THE GRANDEUR OF SENJI FORT

N.Nandhivarman

“The Travels of Father Pimenta in 1597” led him to Senji, the Fort town in Tamil Nadu 60 kms away from Pondicherry coast. “Oh! It is bigger than any city in Portugal, except that of Lisbon “he exclaimed. Kindt in 1614 on his visit admitted that Senji is as large as Amsterdam. Jean Deloche, the noted historian from the Ecole Francaise D’Extreme Orient of Pondicherry frequented Senji for 6 long years to do research and in his valuable French treatise “Senji Ville Fortifie’e du pays Tamoul (2000) “says, “Senji, immortalized by Desingh’s ballad, still popular in South India, is a significant place in the Tamil country. Successively occupied by the Hindus of Vijayanagar, the Nayaks, the Muslims of Bijapur, the Marathas, the Mughals and finally by the French in 1750, it was, at the end of the sixteenth century, one of the biggest cities of the peninsula.”

C.S.Srinivasachari in his “History of Gingee and its Rulers” (1943) narrates the ground situation thus “ It is a melancholy reflection for the historian, that what was once a scene of bustling animation, the dazzling military pomp, can boast at present of only few humble habitations, with a handful of peaceful agriculturalists. Where once chargers pranced in martial array, the bullocks drag the plough share, goaded by a half naked farmer and the spider weaves its web where rulers once sat in state and administered the affairs of the realm.”

The Fort may be in ruins, the town may have lost its grandeur, but among the ruler’s only one name and that too of a young boy hailing in a family that came all the way from Bundhelkand to rule a Tamil territory has been adored for his valour and folklore made his name immortal in people’s memory. Yes it is Raja Desingh who flashes in our mind whenever we think of Senji. M.G.Ramachandran played the role of Raja

Desingh in a Tamil movie, but his fans could not digest the death of the hero and the film failed at box office.

But in real life the memory of Raja Desingh is “preserved even to this day in every town and village of South India. The wandering minstrel sings to groups of villagers under the banyan tree of the heroism of Raja Desingh of how he loved and fought and fell,” says C.S.Srinivasachari.

The Moghul Monarch Aurengazeb made a chieftain from Bundhelkand, Swarup Singh, the ruler of Senji in 1700 A.D. Swarup Singh passed away in his old age in Senji in 1714 A.D.

Hearing his death, the son of Swarup Singh, Desingh started from Bundhelkand towards Senji. At that juncture he would never have dreamt that the journey to immortality had started. Since a firman had been granted by Aurengazeb in his father's favour by way of hereditary right Desingh took up formal possession of the jaghir. The Nawab of Arcot Sadatullah Khan was aghast at this assumption of office, since Swarup Singh was a defaulter to the tune of 70 lakhs for a prolonged period of a decade. This contentious issue led to an uneven war. Nawab Sadatullah Khan's army comprising 8000 horsemen and 10,000 soldiers marched to capture Senji. Raja Desingh had only 350 horses and 500 troopers but he could not be cowed down by brutal force. He stood up against a mighty army and fought till last breath. His queen immolated herself in the funeral pyre. Thus a young Rajput of 22 years old got a unique place in the history of Senji, a fort of many a siege and wars.

Now while researches are undertaken the amazing facts about Senji are emerging slowly.

“This site is particularly interesting for a student of military architecture, because it is the only one in India where a full sequence of the defense systems used in the subcontinent, from the Vijayanagar period to the European conquest, can be observed. It is also

the only one where we can follow, for at least four centuries, the adaptation of the defense to the progress of artillery” That is how Professor Jean Deloche of the Ecole Francaise D’Extreme Orient describes in his French book *Senji (gingi) Ville fortifie’e du pays Tamoul* published in 2000 with 40 line drawings and 334 photographs. This book is the only one of its kind and we have to wait for another six months to see its English version in print.

In his researches Jean Deloche is stunned by “the deep knowledge of water management, a noteworthy engineering skill and boldness of enterprise. Water is made available throughout the year because it is stored in the weathered granite mass, acting as sponge or a filter and reappears as springs in natural reservoirs called “sunai”.

On the six fortified hills, all depressions, cavities, anfractuositities, deep fissures, fractures, where water could be stored have this way been used. Moreover they were systematically enlarged by addition of a brick wall “

This impregnable fortress had fallen in alien hands and such defeats are made a post mortem by a French scholar Bourdot in his book “18th Century Pondicherry.” “It was a revolt amongst the besieged that opened the gates to Bijapur’s army. It was an act of treason that enabled the Maharatta Shivaji to take possession of it in 1677. Without the help of corruption the place would never had fallen to the Moghul power twenty years later. Lastly it is doubtful whether Bussy with his 200 men would have been able to succeed in just few hours, with a raid that resulted in the surrender of the garrison, had it not been the panic and terror that could overcome the most courageous of the defenders during a night attack contrary to all rules especially that night was without moon or stars and when the assailants are yelling demoniacally in an unknown tongue”. M.Bourdat

deserves due applauses for placing these truths in the pages of history to set the record straight.

Jain Saints had dwelled in the hills of Gingee from 2nd century to 6th centuries, as evident by many stone carvings and other evidences of being citadel of Jainism. Gingee was under Pallava Emperors from 600 to 900 AD. Chozha Emperors ruled Gingee from 900 to 1103 AD. In the stone epigraphs at Aanangur of Athitya Chozhan (871-907) and of Athiya Chozhan II (985-1013) it becomes crystal clear that Chozha Emperors ruled Gingee. Pandya Emperors, Chozha Rulers and Hoysala Kings ruled between 1014 to 1190 AD. Yadhava kings ruled Gingee between 1190 to 1330 AD. It came under Vijayanagar rule from the fag end of 14th century and for 150 years it was under Vijayanagar rule. It saw the rule of Bijapur Sultans in between 1649-1677 AD. Maharastrians ruled from 1677-1697. Moguls were in power from 1700-1750 AD. It slipped between British and French rule from 1750. This is in nutshell the historical imprints left on Gingee, and for such a Fort which has a history dating back to 1800 years if proper publicity is made in abroad it will definitely attract world tourists. It also needs the help of world agencies that protect heritage to improve its infrastructure and other amenities.

The Fort at Gingee declared as National Monument from 1921 is under the Archeological Department. Its history and the archeological finds in its vicinity must be publicized to promote archeological and historical tourism. But no steps are afoot in governmental promotion of archeological and historical tourism. It is a miracle that a Fort that has seen many a battle is still there for everyone to see. The Collector of South Arcot recommended to the Board of Revenue in 1803 to demolish the Gingee Fort fearing it may fall into the hands of French. Around 1850 again someone wanted to convert Gingee Fort into a depot for storage of salt. . Fortunately these suggestions were not carried out.

We have a living monument, a marvel which should be utilized properly and Union Tourism Ministry must contemplate on marketing Senji in the Tourism market.

THE GINGEE FORT OF VALOUR

N.Nandhivarman

The silent revolution by French institutions in Pondicherry is not being noticed with requisite interest. Professor M.Bourdat of Lycee Francaise in his book 18 th Century Pondicherry published in 1992 writes about Inland Forts, but fortunately the task to write about Senji (Gingee) falls on the shoulders of Jean Deloche of the Ecole Francaise D'Extreme-Orient and he had produced a monumental work in his mother tongue French entitled "Senji (Gingi) Ville fortifie'e du pays Tamoul". By next year English version of this book is going to appear. Then it will take decades to see it in Tamil. To know about the history of a Fort situated in Tamil Nadu, more than the Universities and Research Institutions here the, French institute called Ecole Francaise D'Extreme Orient had been rendering valuable services, which must be lauded with deep sense of gratitude. The archeological excavations of Arikamedu brought out in a book by Vimala Begley and titled "The Ancient Port of Arikamedu Vol I" is yet to be translated into Tamil. Now the French book on Senji by this institute must awaken Indian Research institutions to keep pace and bring both books in Tamil for the benefit of Tamil speaking people.

Far away from Pondicherry the entrance of the Gingee Fort has got a Pondicherry Gate. Similarly Pondicherry has a Gingee Salai, road that leads to Gingee. Why So? It denotes the inseparable historical connectivity between these two places. French captured Gingee and it remained with the French for almost a decade.

The battle for Gingee is vividly portrayed in volume XV of the "Lettres edifiantes et curieuses" written by a

Jesuit priest Father Lavour. “ On September 11, 1750 Bussy and d’Auteuil arrived at the scene of battle towards 7 o’clock in the evening. While the besieged opened fire in un-coordinated fashion French artillery contained them within their cover. When the moon had set, a detachment under the command of three officers scaled the hill of Rajagiri.

It is not known how these men were able to clear the deep breach with its drawbridge, which defended the topmost boulder, an enormous natural donjon. Then towards 4 o’ clock in the morning, a loud cry was heard coming from the top of one of the mountains. “Vive Le Roll”.

It was Mm de Saint Georges, Veri and Le Normandy who, followed by their troops had carried out the order they had been given. The attack then became general. M d’ Fauteuil had the gate of the citadel blown up.

Terror spread amongst the defending Moors who fired weekly several times and then fled. In less than an hour one had become master of all.” This how French conquest of Gingee is recorded.

Many have conquered and many have ruled Gingee but a young man known for his bravery is still the hero of Gingee, that too after getting killed in a war. Yes, this brave man Desingh at the age of 22 with just 500 troopers and 350 horses faced an army of 8000 horsemen and 10,000 soldiers. The result he lost his life, his wife got immolated in his funeral pyre. But he lives in history and peoples memory.

Raja Desingh, the film where M.G.Ramachandiran played Raja Desingh was not well received by the audience because the fans of MGR did not relish the thought of hero dying in a war. But the real hero Raja Desingh is a hero living in folklore, ballads and peoples memory. The difference in these battles is while French recorded the history of the battle, Tamils wrote folk songs adding their imaginative skills, and that is why historians dismiss these literary evidences unless

corroborated with archaeological and other findings. A question arises to every ones mind. How could a fort that produced the heroic Desingh in later days fall so easily to French? The answer is found in a book of a French scholar who is true to his quest towards truth.

This impregnable fortress had fallen in alien hands and such defeats are made a post mortem by a French scholar Bourdot in his book "18 th Century Pondicherry." "It was a revolt amongst the besieged that opened the gates to Bijapur's army. It was an act of treason that enabled the Maharatta Shivaji to take possession of it in 1677.

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Jain Saints had dwelled in the hills of Gingee from 2-nd century to 6 th centuries, as evident by many stone carvings and other evidences of Gingee being citadel of Jainism. Gingee was under Pallava Emperors in between 600 to 900 AD. Chozha Emperors ruled Gingee from 900 to 1103 AD. In the stone epigraphs at Aanangur of Athitya Chozhan (871-907) and of Athiya Chozhan II (985-1013) it becomes crystal clear that Chozha Emperors ruled Gingee. Pandya Emperors, Chozha Rulers and Hoysala Kings ruled in between 1014 to 1190 AD. Yadhava kings ruled Gingee in between 1190 to 1330 AD. It came under Vijayanagar rule from the fag end of 14 th century and for 150 years it was under Vijayanagar rule. It came under the

rule of Bijapur Sultans between 1649-1677 AD. Maharastrians ruled from 1677-1697. Moghuls ruled from 1700-1750 AD. It slipped between British and French rule from 1750. This is in nutshell the historical imprints left on Gingee, and for such a Fort which has a history dating back to 1800 years if proper publicity is made in abroad it will definitely attract world tourists. It also needs the help of world agencies that protect heritage to improve its infrastructure and other amenities. As an authority on Gingee Professor Jean Deloche describes with passion “the technological skills shown in water management and also in the art of war after the invention of gunpowder.”

Professor Jean Deloche elaborates the military architecture angle too with vivid details. According to him, during the rule of Vijayanagar Governors “the construction was based on quadrangular works. Curtain walls were made of segments forming salient angles, flanked by square or rectangular towers. Stonewalls were made of earth and rubble filling, with wedge shaped stone blocks and no mortar in joints except in battlement of stone or brick. Gateways consisted of two rectangular platforms separated by a central passageway. This is the old system of fortification.”

Talking to us enthusiastically the Professor is at his best spirit while he narrates about the profound changes brought by Nayaks in their almost 100 year rule “ in the art of defense, a consequence of the introduction of gun powder into warfare and the development of powerful artillery. It is based on circular and semi circular works, which by establishing a flanking fire, remedied the defects of former constructions. It started with the reshaping of some of the old walls and battlements. Embankments of earth were given a facing of masonry and towers were rounded in the lower fort, almond shaped merlons replaced the older ones”

“The big innovation of the period is the construction of the first enclosure, with semi circular towers, surrounding Krishnagiri and extending to the eastern cliff of Chandrayandurgam, linking the three hills, in the form of a triangle. With extensive use of explosive projectiles and the development of siege artillery, the other mountains Kurangudurgam and Kusumalai were also fortified in the same way, as well as the south west spur of Chandrayanmdurgam, since then called Sakkilidurgam”.

“A new defensive system was adopted to protect the gateways. Moreover cavaliers or round structures were raised behind the towers to lend support and provide firing platforms for artillery” This architectural marvel from military point of view and from the general view found expression in the best water management plan of a fort blended together had created a uniqueness and hence Jean Deloche describes that it

The Fort at Gingee declared as National Monument from 1921 is under the Archeological Department. Its history and the archeological finds in its vicinity must be publicized to promote archeological and historical tourism. French scholar Jean Deloche and his publications though are known to scholars must be taken to the common man and Government of India must suitably honour him. But no steps are afoot in governmental promotion of archeological and historical tourism. An Engineer by profession R.Mani had been tirelessly giving a helping hand in preparation of maps and repairs of forts including Gingee fort. He has also penned a book in Tamil “ Varaltaril Gingee. This is just a candle while we have to illuminate Gingee’s history with 1000 lights.

[Courtesy: New Indian Express dated: 25th September 2004]

STONE INSCRIPTIONS SPEAK

N.Nandhivarman



Monuments, Inscriptions and copper plates speak. They reveal the past. Epigraphists unearth history hidden in these. There are around 535 stone inscriptions found out till date which includes Sanskrit (4), Kannada (2), Latin (1), French (2), Armenian (1) and most of the ones in Tamil. Late Pulavar Kuppusamy and Villianur Venkatesan did the compiling of these epigraphs. Professor Vijayavenugopal Senior Research Fellow of the Epigraphy Section of Ecole Francaise D' Extreme-Orient of Pondicherry had translated these and a new book is on the anvil.

For more than 1000 years of our history could be traced in these stone inscriptions. The rule of Rastrakooda king Kannaradevan comes to light through 16 inscriptions. Similarly sixteen Chozha Emperors have ruled Pondicherry region, which is recorded in 220 inscriptions. Eight Pandyan kings (18), Two later Pallavas (13), Thirteen Vijayanagara Kings (27) and under Sambuvaraiyer (3) are the break up of

the total 535 stone inscriptions found in and around Pondicherry.

Almost all major villages of Pondicherry and Karaikal regions have these inscriptions namely Thirubuvanaï (188), Madagadipattu (83), Thirunallaru (51), Villianur (50), Thiruvandarkoil (42), Bahour (45), Pondicherry (30). In Karaikal region at Karaikal (10), Thirumalairayanpattinam (6), Nallambal (7), Mathur (1), Nedungadu (1), Sethur (3), Sorakudi (1), Melponsethi (1) Pandasozhanur (7), Thirukanji (3), Kariamaniccam (2), Keezhkasakudi (2), Melkasakudi (1) and Dharmapuram (1).

Coming to recent past a monument of a brave soldier reminds us about the year 1778 when Pondicherry was under siege by the British. The brave sons of Pondicherry with only 1000 soldiers defended their soil fiercely against the 24,000 attackers. An isolated commemorative stele of a brave Englishman Captain Aug de Morgan killed by the French artillery on 11 th October 1778 stands on a barren terrain near Jipmer Hospital. This monument reminds us of not only the bravery of Pondicherrians but also their nobility to pay due respects even to the enemy warrior.

Another Tomb of Pauline de Kerjean nephew of Dupliex, a little girl who served in the Deccan wars epitomizes brave French womanhood." The skulls, bats and tibia are symbols more sinister than comforting flames that represent the eternal soul," writes M.Bourdat, Professor of Literature in Lycee Francaise.

The Annual Reports of Indian Epigraphy 1887-1905 is the first of its kind in Indian subcontinent on listing out the various stone inscriptions. J.Burges, the Director General of Archaeological Survey of India and E.Holtzsch, the Epigraphist of the Archaeological Survey of South India are the pioneers who laid down the foundation for epigraphic studies. In French India at the same time French scholars have unearthed many stone inscriptions. Jouveau Dubaille found a stone monument in the garden in front of present day

Raj Niwas which speaks about the fortifications on the shore together with “Port Marine” built by Joseph Franoise Dupliex, the Governor of Pondicherry.

While these speak about recent history stone inscriptions are useful to know how this area was ruled. Though 535 epigraphs speak about various rulers at most of the period Pondicherry was part and parcel of Nadu Nadu, which means middle country. There are historical reasons for this region to be called as Nadu Nadu. The Pallava rule did not extend up to Pennaiyaaru and Chozha rule was up to Vellaru. In between these around 10 small states were there such as Vanagoppadi, Singapuranaadu, Oymanaadu, Vesalipadi nadu etc. These areas ruled by small states were called Nadunadu. The Saivite book of hymns Thevaram calls the pilgrimage centers in this region as Nadu Naattu thirupathigal.

From these inscriptions we understand how the territory was divided into Mandalam, Kottam, and Kootram similar to District, Taluk and Panchayat. The subdivisions for purpose of revenue have been divided into 28 valanaadugal. Athiraja valanaadu was named after Rajathirajan I. This comes to public notice while epigraphists found this inscription at Tirunallar which belonged to the regime of Rajendra II. The book by the Ecole Francaise D’Extreme Orient had generated lot of interest among public, as they were hoping that this book will throw more light on how this region was ruled and what were the social customs prevailing during that period etc. For instance in one inscription dating back to 1000 years in Bahur the word untouchable (*Theendathagar*) is used, wherein the tank desalting work was forbidden to untouchables since that water reaches the deity. That may be the first instance of that word being used, scholars opine. Anyhow stones reflect the societal practices of those days be it good or bad. A true historical perspective emerges, and Pondicherrians come to understand their region more with scholars throwing more light. [Courtesy: New Indian Express dated: 16th April 2005]

NETHAJI'S VIETNAMESE CONNECTIONS

N.Nandhivarman

The French connection to Puducherry is well known and wherever French flag went along with it the Pudicherry connectivity became a regular feature. Saigon became second home to many Puducherrians following that rule. "In August 1858, a French squadron, which included a few Spanish warships, attacked the fortress of Danang that covered the road to Hue, the imperial capital. A year later, the squadron captured Saigon. Though their military superiority was undisputable the invaders failed to force Vietnamese to its knees. Vietnamese historians compare the French colonialists to silkworms who consumed the mulberry leaf little by little. Not until 1883, all of 25 years later did the imperial court of Saigon sign an unequal treaty acknowledging French supremacy "writes Yevgeny Kobelev in a book on Ho Chi Minh.



While French armies, which include Puducherrians, struggled to gain foothold in Vietnam the Nattukottai Chettiars from Tamil Nadu went there in search of business opportunities and Puducherrians went to take care of state administration. Dharmanathan Purushanthi of Puducherry went in 1870 and his urge to stand on his own made him bid adieu to administrative jobs. He ventured into business on the

lines of Chettiars. He established a soda factory and owned a liquor shop near harbour. His success there reached Puducherry and his brother Kannusamy Purushanthi sent his son Savarikkannu Purushanthi to Saigon. Savarikkannu Purushanthi became a moneychanger and real estate owner, minted money and came back to Puducherry as the most prosperous citizen. At that time prime property close to RajNiwas came in for auction and all the rich had an eye on that but Savarikkannu Purushanthi won the auction. Thus a job seeker made money in Indo China and brought properties in his native soil.

The Bank of Indo China too functioned in Puducherry in the place of current United Commercial Bank till Puducherry's independence. Thus Puducherry and Indo China connections led to cross country marriages. This resulted in the growth of Vietnamese restaurants even now we see in Puducherry. Puducherrians owned properties here as well as there. Savarikkannu Purushanthi indulged in breeding race horses, which earned him fame in Vietnam. While the earlier Purushanthi's were not highly educated in spite of their monetary success they did not have any political vision. But Savarikkannu Purushanthi's brother son Leon Purushanthi was a French graduate and he meticulously built his reputation as banker and at same time started airing his views for public consumption. It was a time when Mahatma Gandhi had launched his civil disobedience movement in India. Most of the job seekers from Puducherry have accepted French colonialism with reverence, but Gandhiji's movement made Purushanthi sit up and watch colonial interests and intrigues.

He resigned from government service and started fully concentrating on business. His writings started appearing in French magazines and newspapers of Indo China. He was distressed to note at the inequality shown towards Indians because of their dress. He strongly felt that modern dress is not harmful and advocated all should change from dhotis to pants

which are convenient to wear and even wrote letters to Mahatma Gandhi on the subject.

Leon Purushanthi was against caste system and from Indo China he could appreciate the self-respect movement of Periyar E.V.Ramasamy, which made him, write 5 articles in French magazines yet to become known here. Though he was in Christianity, all through his life in Saigon he had closely associated with Tamil Muslims association of Saigon. He frequented Hindu temples more than the church. Leon Purushanthi is a French citizen and most of the French citizens till date have never participated in Indian or French Indian freedom struggle. They were satisfied with Liberty-Equality-Fraternity under the French flag. In Saigon though most were of this line of thinking Leon Purushanthi stands apart showing keen interest and involvement in India's freedom struggle.

The rise of Nethaji Subash Chandra Bose and his Indian National army attracted the freedom loving Purushanthi. While Nethaji was taken in streets of Saigon during Japanese occupation Leon Purushanthi greeted him by presenting gold kasumaalai, which adored his wife's neck till that time. Indian Independence League of Nethaji was looking for an office space and Leon Purushanthi willingly offered his palatial house in Saigon for that purpose. His house 76 Rue Paul Blanchy at Saigon became the Secretariat of Nethaji's Indian Independence League, news about this appeared in Azad Hind magazine too.

His support to Indian independence particularly for Nethaji was not to the liking of the French; mostly the supporters of Marshal Pertain who were ruling the French controlled Saigon at that time. They were furious with Purushanthi and waiting for time to teach him a lesson. Unfortunately the World War II ended in victory to the opposite side. Japan lost and along with it Nethaji too lost. Nethaji recruited lot of Puducherrians in his Indian National army. These aspects and the support given by freedom lovers like

Leon Purushanthi have become forgotten facts with the failures that embraced their struggles.

When French regained power in Saigon they picked up Leon Purushanthi from his house and imprisoned him. They tortured him like anything else and he became mentally retarded due to the cruelty inflicted upon him. Leon Purushanthi born on May 1 of 1901 within 45 years reached his glory and thereafter till he breathed last in 1968 he lived having lost his mental equilibrium. Life in Saigon became miserable with his properties being confiscated. Leon Purushanthi returned to Puducherry and lived in his house next to Raj Niwas. He used to visit Manakula Vinayagar temple and go around the park not conscious that India and Puducherry had gained independence. His sacrifices for the cause of the country still had not won any recognition.

“It is high time a postal stamp be brought out on Leon Purushanthi in remembrance of him and many Puducherrians who perished in the Indian National Army of Nethaji” said A.Ramasamy former Vice Chancellor of Alagappa University who had written the “History of Pondicherry”. Purushanthi’s descendent J.B.P.More himself a historian and let us hope he writes about Vietnam connections to Puducherry.

[Courtesy: New Indian Express 6th August 2005]

PALLAVA ICONOLOGY A STUDY

N.Nandhivarman

The Ecole Francaise D'Extreme Orient [EFEO] is a place where silently lot of research is done but it is all in French. "To know about all Saiva agamas one had to go to Paris University which had done extensive and intensive research", says Dr.Vijayavenugopal of the Epigraphy section of this French Institute." There are lots of Tamil scholars knowing French, but they don't translate all these researches into Tamil. These results he says. As I frequent this institute I found the photographers Ravindran and Ramasamy Babu equally knowledgeable on all Temple Art of Tamil Nadu. They were showing in computer screen a pillar with a sculpture, and a young French lady immediately said it is from Kailasanatha temple of Kanchipuram. I was dumbfounded. Most Tamils may have visited temples, but just by seeing a sculpture they won't be in a position to recapture its identity and history.



[The narrative panel of Lord Lingodbhavar at Kailasanathar temple in Kanchipuram]

I got introduced and enquired about her mission. She is Valerie from Paris University who had come all the

way from France and had stayed here at Pondicherry for 8 months. Miss Valerie is doing her PhD on Pallava iconography under the guidance of Ms.Nalini Balbir who works at University of Paris. Ms.Nalini Balbir, her Professor is specializing in Jainism. She had sent her two students to stay in Pondicherry to undertake researches. That is how Valerie, a French girl had come here. Another Srilankan Tamil girl Udaya Velupillai is doing research on Sirkazhi temple. It is needless to say that Mr.Jean Deloche took 6 years to do a research on Gingee. The time taken, efforts put in to make a research and the dedication of these scholars makes them excel in their findings. In another rare feat to the team of scholars is that the 11,000 manuscripts collected meticulously and preserved by EFEO Pondicherry had been declared last week as world heritage having been accepted by UNESCO.

Miss Valerie says that the “Pallavas invented new iconography in 7 to 8 th centuries, which never existed before. According to Miss. Valerie it is the beginning of South Indian iconography. Of particular mention is that of Saivite iconography for which no parallels are found in the North India. But when it comes to Vaishnavite iconography we find similar evidences in North India. The best of Pallava iconography belongs to the period of Rajasimha Pallaveshwaran. Kailasanatha temple of Kanchipuram is a temple with very rich evidences of art”.

The idol of Lingodbhavar at Kailasanathar Temple Kanchipuram may appear to be depicting a myth about ego clashes between Hindu pantheons of gods. It shows Lord Shiva coming out of Lingam and Lord Vishnu in Varaha form digging the Earth to trace his feet. Lord Brahma assumes the bird form of “annaparavai”.

And goes to find Lord Shiva’s head. In midway he returns with failure, whereas the efforts to reach his foot also did not bear fruit. Explaining the inner meaning of this myth it is said Brahma denotes mental

power and Vishnu physical power. The message of the sculpture is that you can't reach god by either mental power or physical power. This narrative panel of mythology is a remarkable piece of Pallava art.

A picture or sculpture is worth a thousand words. Iconography is the traditional art of portraying figures in pigment that symbolically mean more than a simple depiction of the person involved. Icons have been used by different religions including Hinduism, Buddhism, and Christianity. "In the case of the various Hindu gods almost everything is considered symbolism. The figures are blue-skinned (the color of heaven) with multiple arms holding various symbols depicting aspects of the god (the drums of change, the flower of new life, the fire of destruction, etc.). The many heads, eyes, feet, and arms do not have to be taken literally" opined a scholar. Iconography had grown into a new science called iconology.

Nowadays study is devoted to all hidden aspects and meanings with the origins of such art forms, hence new name of iconology gained currency.

Soviet scholar Sergei Tokorav in his History of Religion writes "The cult of cross has nothing to do with the supposed instrument used for Christ's execution. The Romans did in fact crucify people on crosses but they were in the form of letter "T". The Christian cross was extremely an ancient symbol that can be found in Egyptian, Cretan and other art work. Its origin is hard to establish, but it is certain that cult of cross had nothing to do with the legend of the crucifixion of Christ". As in West in India too nowadays scholars are looking for hidden meaning and roots of various symbols in the art. The snake on Lord Shiva denotes the Snake cult of the early Naga society. There is a debate among scholars about the origins of Saivism. One school claims it emerged from the lost continent of Lemuria. Other school argues that it came from Kashmiri Saivism.

Near Baroda there is a place called Karom, which is shortened form of Kayaroganam. It is from this place, a sect of Saivism Kayaroganam emerged. In Tamil Nadu Nagapattinam is called Thirunagai Kayaroganam., indicating the spread of that sect here. Kaya aroganam indicates we have to reach upwards to God. Kaya avaroganam means God descending to Earth. These two sects of Saivism differ on this point. From this sect the musical term aroganam and avaroganum came, says Dr.Vijayavenugopal. There is also an opinion that Chola emperor Rajarajan brought pasupatham sect of Saivism from North.

All these researches done in French will help Miss Valerie get a doctorate from Paris University. She refuses to talk about her research thesis, which is justifiable. But after this thesis is submitted until it gets translated in English and Tamil, people of Pondicherry or Tamil Nadu will have to remain in dark about its content. The time difference will result in Tamil scholars lagging behind in updated knowledge on iconology.

[Courtesy: New Indian Express dated: 2nd July 2005]

MOUNT MOHSIN OR MOUNT EVEREST?

The highest peak, Mount Everest was first measured in 1856. It was scaled as 8839 m i.e. 29,000 feet high. But it was fixed at 29,002 feet [8840m] high. The arbitrary addition of 2 feet was added to avoid the impression of a rounded calculation. Another Indian survey in the year 1950 concluded the height to be 29.028 feet. In the year 1998, the American Everest Expedition installed a GPS unit on the highest bedrock and a value of 29.035 feet [8850 m] was fixed based on this device. Nepal did not agree to this and holds the view that the height is 8848 m only. The Peoples Republic of China sent an expedition team in May 22nd 2005. After months of hard work, China's State Bureau of Surveying and Mapping announced the height of Everest as 8844.43 m. This newest height is based on the actual rock and not on the snow and ice caps. China claims this to be the most accurate measurement.

There is not only lack of consensus in measurement and height, each country has its own name for Mount Everest. Nepal calls it Sagarmatha, thereby revealing the pre-historic fact that Himalayas was once ocean .Sagar means sea, matha means mother. Tibet calls it Chomolangma, the meaning of the word must be found in Tibetan language.

Mount Everest was first discovered in 1852 and till 1865 it was only referred as Peak XV. The British Surveyor General of India Sir Andrew Waugh gave its current name Mount Everest. China continues to oppose this name. China's People's Daily in 2002 wanted a colonial name to be removed and the peak known by its Tibetan name. Meanwhile who first measured it stirs another controversy. A claim is made that Radhanath Sikdar, an Indian mathematician and surveyor from Bengal was first to identify the peak in 1852 using trigonometric calculations based on measurements made with telescopic measurements from 240 kilometers away in India.

To ascertain this let us look for other evidences. The book Great Arc by John Key describes the stupendous scientific expedition undertaken across the Indian sub continent in 19th century under the British Raj. The Frontline magazine from The Hindu group interviewed John Key, when he came to Chennai to participate in the 200th anniversary celebrations of the beginning of Great Arc, and to deliver William Lampton Commemoration lecture on Great Trigonometrical Survey. In that interview published in Frontline September 26, 2003 he states:

“The Great Arc has always been presented as a British achievement. Lambton and Everest associated with it were British. One has to remember, as someone said this evening, most of the mathematical work, which is really the most important aspect was done by..... [Interruption by Frontline correspondent: “By Bengalis?”]

“Not just Bengalis. Precision engineering, necessary for the instrument used in the Great Arc, is very critical. A lot of these instruments were made in India. The Great Arc’s senior most instrument designer and engineer were in fact from Arcot in Tamilnadu. He was called Syed Hussain Mohsin. He was most brilliant instrument manufacturer. People like Lambton and Everest were heavily indebted to him, and indeed said so.”

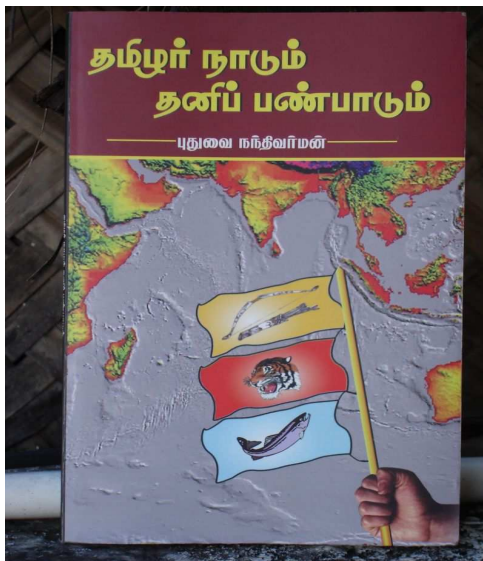
During this interview John Key answers a pertinent question: Is it true that George Everest had never seen the peak that is named after him. ?

John Key “He never saw the peak. It was after him because it was his completion of the measurement of the Great Arc that made it possible to measure the altitudes of Himalayan peaks. It was in the course of the measurement of all the peaks visible at that time that the mountain was discovered. So it was named in his honour.”

Saint Thomas Mount was the starting point of the Great Trigonometrical survey. The Great Arc was just a north-south measurement. The GTS measurement went on until about 1880 within India itself. After 1880 it extended east and west to Burma, Afghanistan and so on. It extended into Burma, Thailand and Laos in the last 20 years on 19th century.

So it becomes evident that Syed Hussain Mohsin, the senior most instrument designer and engineer, with all the experience he gathered from the beginning of survey till it reached Himalayas, has a unique place, since his services are acknowledged by both William Lambton and George Everest. In western countries, any discovery is named after the discoverer. All scientific names in various fields are derived from their inventor's name. Hence it would be most appropriate to change the name of Mount Everest, a peak on which George Everest never set his foot, to Mount Mohsin, duly acknowledging the brain behind the expedition and discovery. The claims of others have no such impartial endorsement as that of Syed Hussain Mohsin. This demand, I had made in one of my articles in the book written by me in 2006.

[Thamizhar Naadum Thani Pannpadum : Available at : Mitra Arts and Creations Private Limited 32/8-10 Arcot Road, Kodampakkam Chennai 600024 Pages 144 Price Rs 50.]



TOPONYMICAL PROBE TRACING

ONENESS OF HUMANITY

Pondicherry is a melting pot of various linguistic groups and cultures. Therefore it is no surprise that lot of people from Orissa have found a haven in Pondicherry. Trailing them to study for his research papers R.Balakrishnan I.A.S, *Chief Electoral Officer of Government of Orissa [in 2005][currently Deputy Election Commissioner, Election Commission of India-2009]* often visits Pondicherry. There is another dimension to his visits, which is to pay respects to his teacher Dr.Vijayavenugopal of Ecole Francaise D'Extreme Orient.

Mr.Balakrishnan had presented numerous research papers and he specializes in toponymical probe.

“Place names are fossilized representations of the past. In retracing the footprints of our ancestral migrations, place names can be our guiding stars. Our case in this regard is built on the foundation that the migrating people do carry their place names and reuses them in new found homeland as a mark of continuity with past.” says R.Balakrishnan explaining the rationale of the toponymical probe he had ventured into.

In an article that appeared in the International Journal of Dravidian Linguistics, R.Balakrishnan throws “New lights on ancient contacts between Kalinga and Indonesia”. A study conducted by him revealed remarkable similarities between the place names of Java, Sumatra and Bali regions of Indonesia on one hand and the places of Southern Orissa on the other hand. The Chilka region of Orissa seems to have been the focal point of Kalingan interactions with South East Asia.

Balakrishnan is serious in his research and had done extensive travel to remote regions to draw similarities of place names. In another research paper titled Tamil:

A Toponymical Probe he had given a long list of place names that bear the “Tam” prefixes.

In a state wise alphabetical list of Tam prefixed place names in India, he states that in Andhra Pradesh [29], Arunachal Pradesh [11], Assam [38], Bihar [53], Gujarat [5], Goa [1], Haryana [3], Himachal Pradesh [34], Karnataka [24], Maharashtra [120], Meghalaya [5], Manipur [14], Madhya Pradesh [60], Nagaland [4], Orissa [84], Punjab [4], Rajasthan [26], Tamil Nadu [10], Uttar Pradesh [64], West Bengal [24] with a grand total of 612 places names resembling Tamil and Tamil influences do occur.

The spread of Tamil conquests and migration

This research may sound funny, but researches are always working out new avenues to trace truths of the past. One of the pioneers of rice research in India Mr.Ramiah had identified Jeypore region of Orissa as another independent center of origin of rice. Subsequent researches established that broad geographical region comprising Jharkhand; Chhattisgarh, Western Orissa and Jeypore tracts of Orissa satisfy the basic requirements to claim as center of origin of cultivated rice. If one can trace roots of rice cultivation why not trace roots of a civilization and its spread, asks Dr.Arivunambi, Dean of Tamil Studies in Pondicherry University.

“In the Godda District of Bihar there is a village named Tamilgoda. In that District alone there are 12 place names, which end goda Tamilgoda is one of them. In the Puri District of Orissa a place name called Tamilikudi draws our immediate attention. There is no need to establish the Dravidian etymology of the suffix kudi. Tamilikudi is not an isolate case of occurrence as there are 37 place names with kudi suffix within the administrative boundary of Orissa.

“In the process of locating Tamil related place names the entire list of India was scrutinized and I found a name called Tamia in Chindwara District of Madhya

Pradesh. Having come across Tamilgoda and Tamilkudi is not surprising to me. However when this name was noticed in the surprising company of such typical Tamil place names Palani, Tekadi, Theni, Bodi and many other geographical names that are in currency in the Madurai region of Tamilnadu and its adjoining upcountry neighbor Idukki, its significance and implications could be understood,” says Balakrishnan.

Another research paper titled “Toponymy of Konark”, by Balakrishnan traces the spread of the word Kona. The place name of Konark is a combination of two words kona and arka. A search for Kona as a place name prefix reveals as many as 249 occurrences. Out of this Kona, a mono word place name has been used at least in 13 places [4 in Andhra Pradesh, 3 in Uttar Pradesh, and 2 in Madhya Pradesh one each in Orissa, Bihar, Haryana and Maharashtra]. Kon seems to be a universal term. ‘The primitive tribes of Austro-Asiatic and Dravidian origin use the term as much as the speakers of Indo-Aryan do. Even the English terms such as cone, conical based on Latin conus (derived from Greek konus) show definite affinity with the term.

Depending on the context, Vedic people used a number of terms to denote angle and most common of them is Karna. The term Karna means Sun, the son of Kunti by Surya and hence the sun nexus of the term would be obvious. Karna denoting ray or beam of light is considered to be the basis for the Greek term Karneios that means radiant. This establishes the nexus between the angle and ray. The Peruvian prefix Kon means Sun and the mythical Sun king who claimed direct descent from Sun is called Kon-Tiki. So goes on Balakrishnan identifying in Iran on the Gulf of Oman just 3 km away from main coastline a village called Konark. About 5 kms away from Persian Gulf he traces another village Konark. Again in the plateau of Iran he finds Konark. The toponymical probe is a new way to establish oneness of the human race. Deveneya Paavanar and his successor R.Madhivanan have used

etymological probes to prove that all languages emanated from one common language. As all continents were once united in Pangea that in Latin means All Earth, the distribution of place names across continents in another way proves continental drift and the migration of human race from one place to another.

Courtesy: The New Indian Express -weekend-18.06-2005

TAMIL MUSIC THROUGH AGES

N.Nandhivarman

“In Western Music even today Piano holds a key position, they have not abandoned it. Equal temperamental scale is the basis for western music. It is a digital scale that enables them to deliver orchestral music. Unlike Tamils who gave up Yazh, westerners did not desert Piano. This is a lesson for Tamils. Similarly all the great Musicians like Beethoven, Mozart, Handel, Bach, Wagner and Brahms wrote hundreds of symphonies, and only in Beethoven’s tenth symphony vocal music finds place. Since in other symphonies there is no language, every country is eager to hear the music, language problem does not arise,” says P.T.R.Kamalai Thiagarajan in his book Isai Thamizhin Unmai Varalaru.

In Pondicherry Kalaimamani Arimalam Padmanaban opines that Tamil Music must spread to other parts of the globe. For this music sans language must be propagated or for Tamil musical notes we must select suitable poems in languages like English, French etc, so that we can spread the message that Tamil music belongs to the common heritage of mankind with greater antiquity than their cultures. Dr. Arimalam Padmanaban says that all western music could be adopted in sankaraparanam, nadabhairavi and keeravani, 3 musical notes of the South Indian Music. The earlier Tamil names of these three notes are Arumpaalai, Padumalaipaalai and Pazham Panjuram (source: Silapathigaram) respectively.

He surprises us by saying that at the Olympic closing ceremony old classic music of Chinese was sung which is similar to our mohanam. It was known as Mullai pann in Sangam age and later came to be known as mohanam. Pann in Tamil means raga and scale in English. Silapathigaram, the Tamil epic mentions about 11991 panngal, which is lost in the ravages of time. Scholars like Dr.Arimalam Padmanaban are

working hard to redeem the lost musical heritage of Tamils, lost due to invasions and colonial rule.

Arimalam Padmanabhan who obtained his Doctorate from Pondicherry University is preparing a Dictionary of Tamil Music Literary Terms and he is also planning to do research in Sopaana sangeetham, which is famous in Kerala. He had written about “Therukoothil Isai” which speaks about the musical content of street theatre and is included in the Madras University syllabus as a lesson. His treatise on the Musical contents in Sankaradas swamigal’s Dramas deserves special mention. Sankaradas swamigal could be termed as Shakespeare of Tamil theatre. It is he who stands as an outstanding pioneer of Tamil theatre. Sankaradas swamigal (1867-1922) brought all musical streams into Tamil theatre. For instance a Christian missionary Edward Paul contacted Sankaradas swamigal and wanted him to write songs for western devotional songs. Swamigal not only obliged him, but through that exercise mastered the nuances of Western music and in his dramas he wrote Tamil songs for western tunes says Arimalam Padmanaban in his research paper brought out in book form. “In carnatic music various forms of Hindustani crept into during the period of Gopalakrishna Bharathy in 19 th century” says Arimalam Padmanaban, thereby analyzing the influences, its origins, admixture of musical forms with precision.

Sankaradas swamigal wrote 68 dramas, and if Padmanaban had not laboured hard to trace all this for his research quest the complete list would not be available to others. Sankaradas swamigal in his last days spent his life in Pondicherry and breathed his last here on 13 th November 1922. There is a memorial here in the graveyard at Karuvadikuppam Pondicherry where Government of Pondicherry every year celebrates the anniversary of swamigal. Swamigal simplified the classical music and brought it nearer to the common masses. In the history of Tamil music this marks a turning point.

Delving deep into the emergence and uniqueness of Swamigal, Arimalam Padmanaban says that “Gopalakrishna Bharathiar wrote Nandan sarithra keerthanaigal, which marked the revival of the Tamil musical tradition. Following his footsteps Mahakavi Subramania Bharathiar used the same musical notes of Gopalakrishna Bharathiar and wrote songs. Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar brought Tirupavai and Tiruvembai into the Tamil musical usage. Bharathidasan in order to spread Tamil music with help of Telugu scholars translated Thiyagarajas keerthanaihal into Tamil. For instance Thigaraja’s sani thodi deve o manasa in arikambothe raga was rendered into Tamil by Bharathidasan as thathi kooti vaaray o maname.” By such narrations Arimalam points out the cultural exchanges that has taken place and the blending of various musical traditions that run like streams of the same river called humanist culture.

[Courtesy:New Indian Express:12th Feb:2005]

THE CRADLE OF CRAFTS AND ITS EXPORTS

N.Nandhivarman

The international attention may have dawned upon Arikamedu after its archaeological excavations. The trade between Arikamedu and Red Sea Ports is an established fact. . But scholars of the Euro-centric view who hold any significant innovation to have a European or at least Mediterranean origin nowadays find their fantasies shattered. The role of South India in world commerce is now slowly but grudgingly being acknowledged. “Arikamedu was occupied far longer than had been thought and must be considered a South Indian city rather than principally Roman. The lowest levels we could reach go back to the Second century B.C, long before the Romans came. My historical investigations indicate that Arikamedu was occupied down to the seventeenth century, and a date nearly as recent is confirmed archaeologically, at least tentatively.” says Peter Francis Junior who passed away in December 2001.

The French astronomer Guillaume Le Gentil on the basis of some visible evidences recorded the importance of Arikamedu in his travelogue written in French titled as: “Voyage dans les mers de l’Inde” (Paris1779-81).

G.Jouveau Dubreuil described Arikamedu as a Port city called Puduke. L.Faucheux and R.Sarleau published the findings of their excavations in “Les Recherches Archeologiques” in 1942. Apart from these initial studies the first by scientific methods of excavation in 1945 by Mortimer Wheeler is widely known. The book Rome Beyond the Imperial Frontiers (1954) by Wheeler left an impression that “a sleepy fishing village suddenly awakened by enterprising Romans who built stone buildings and a port, then fell back to sleep when the Romans left” feels Francis Peter Junior. From the arretine pottery, table wares used by Romans found there h Wheeler came to the conclusion that Roman trade flourished between 14 to 25 B.C.

Jean Mari Casal conducted his excavations between 1947 and 1950 and opined much before Romans advent, Arikamedu was a prosperous port dating back to 250 B.C. People of that place were civilized even during Iron Age claims J.M.Casal who found gold jewels in burial sites of Suthukeny and was stunned by the prosperity of the people. Vimala Begley in a collaborative project of University of Pennsylvania Museum and University of Madras excavated the site between 1989 and 1992.

The first volume of her monumental work *The Ancient Port of Arikamedu: New Excavations and Researches Volume I*, a publication by L'Ecole Francaise D'Extreme-Orient in 1996 threw more light, and though she passed away on 21 st March 2000, lovers of archaeology are eagerly awaiting the release of her second volume. Also there is a demand to bring out books in Tamil on these researches. These subsequent researches have found that the glory of the site is due to local initiative.

“The place was important and the bead making industries well established before the Romans came. The Romans went there precisely because it was an important port. After whatever constituted the Roman "emporium" was gone, Arikamedu was still very much in touch with the West, sending its gems that direction and receiving wine and other amphorae-packed Mediterranean products for centuries” says Francis Peter Junior.

“Arikamedu traders imported copper, gold, silver, olive oil and wine from west and spices from East. In return their small scale industries were engaged in manufacturing shell bangles, stone bead making by polishing and cutting of semi precious stones like banded agate, cornelian, onyx, jasper, crystalline beryl, aquamarine quartz, amethyst etc, and terracotta for export purposes. Large scale industries were engaged in textiles, dyeing, glass bead making and metal works “says P.Ravichandiran, Lecturer in History at

Ayvvaiyar College for Women at Karaikal, who assisted Vimala Begley in the excavations and a scholar with number of research papers to his credit.

Francis Peter Junior states, "The chief product of Arikamedu must have been beads. It is the first place known to have made small, drawn (cut from a tube) glass beads, the types found almost universally for two millennia. Its stone bead industry was also impressive, and its lapidaries made several important innovations in the field. Workers in the glass bead (Indo-Pacific bead) industry migrated to other places: Mantai, Sri Lanka; Khlong Thom, Thailand; Oc-eo, Vietnam; Srivijaya/Palembang, Sumatra; Sungai Mas, Malaysia; Kuala Selinsing, Malaysia; and Takua Pa, Thailand have now been identified as housing such work. This constituted the largest and longest-lived glass bead industry ever. Stone bead making survived down through the end of the last century, but no trace is now left." Arikamedu much before the word outsourcing was coined imported raw materials and used its craftsmen to finish products for export purposes. This historical fact about the Pondicherry must be borne in mind to set up 100% Export oriented industries and a Special Economic Zone for that purposes to commemorate the memory and legacy of Arikamedu. The revival of Pondicherry Port to once again attract world's attention is to regain the heritage that is lost in the onslaughts of time.

Arikamedu's impact on world trade was impressive. Arikamedu products like glass beads, stone beads, ceramics were in Indonesia by the first century B.C. "The West demanded the garnets, prase, citrine and other stone beads and agate cameo blanks produced in Arikamedu between 1st Century and 1200 A.D. Indo-Pacific beads, though not all of which were made at Arikamedu proper, account for 62.2% of all beads of all materials excavated at all archaeological sites as far away as the Philippines. The Arabs took Indo-Pacific beads to East Africa and across North Africa, through the Sahara to the Forest Zone of West Africa. The

Portuguese procured from Arikamedu because they were in demand in Mozambique.”

There are striking parallels between Indo-Pacific bead making and later techniques and technologies in Europe and America. The Indian prototypes are a millennium or older. The Archeological Survey of India had declared the site as a protected monument and plans are afoot for setting up a site museum. It will also be appropriate to create a Center for Gemology and a Crafts village to settle artisans for reviving these industries that brought Pondicherry into world map by its exports, much before any foreigner set his foot to rule here

[Courtesy: New Indian Express dated 4th September 2004]

THE TAMILS OF REUNION

AND THEIR HYBRID CULTURE

Colonialism cannot be condemned outright. This may sound outrageous. But colonialism in a way introduced the concept of outsourcing attempted in the bygone centuries and currently being debated in the free market era. In a world where free market dominates, the sweat and toils of the slave labourers may be forgotten, but we must realize that in their sufferings the foundations for global market economy is sown. ReUnion is a typical example of outsourcing by the French East India Company, and its history reveals how an hybrid culture emanated amidst Tamil settlers there, who are Tamils but could not speak Tamil, their mother tongue lost in the interregnum of 5 generations of separation from their homeland namely Pondicherry.

The archipelago, comprised of Mauritius, Rodrigues and Réunion, was christened the Mascarenes by Portuguese navigator Pedro de Mascarenhas, following its European discovery in 1512. In 1642 the French settled in the island when La Compagnie des Indes Orientales (the French East India Company) sent its ship, the St-Louis, and the King of France named it Île Bourbon. Much water had flown in the five rivers that irrigate this tiny island since then.

The French Revolution is a turning point in its history. The greatest achievement of the 1848 revolution for the colonies was the abolition of slavery. Slavery, the foundation of economic life in Martinique, Guadeloupe, Guyana and Reunion, had been abolished by the Convention in 1794 but was re-instituted by Napoleon. National Assembly by way of definitive decree on April 27, 1848 declared that 'slavery is an attack on human dignity', it 'destroys the principal of natural law and duty . . . it is a flagrant violation of republican dogma,' and that great unrest could erupt in the colonies if

slavery were not ended, the law abolished slavery in all French colonies and possessions.

Thus a total of 262,564 slaves were thereby freed, most of them in the plantation colonies of the West Indies and Réunion.

But with this abolition of slave labour the need to fill that vacuum arose and plantation owners looked for French India to compensate the loss of slave labour. Thus lot of Tamils found their way to the island of Reunion situated in the Indian Ocean closer to Madagascar. Lot of people from Pondicherry and its surrounds went to the coffee and other plantations in Reunion as labour.

The coffee plantations were destroyed often destroyed by cyclones and the Tamil labour had to struggle hard facing the fury of Nature. Napoleon Bonaparte lost the island to the British for a short break of five years. Under British rule, sugar cane was introduced to Réunion and quickly supplanted food production as the primary crop. It resulted in the dispossession of many small farmers who were forced to sell out to those with capital to invest in the new monoculture. The supplanted farmers migrated to the interior to find land and carry on with their agricultural activities. During this period, the Desbassyns brothers rose to success as the island's foremost sugar barons. The vanilla industry, introduced in 1819, also grew rapidly.

The golden age of trade and development in Réunion lasted until 1870, when competition from Cuba and the European sugar beet industry, combined with the opening of the Suez Canal, resulted in an economic slump. Shipping decreased, the sugar industry declined and land and capital were further concentrated in the hands of a small French elite. Close on the cessation of hostilities in First World War global demand for sugar increased. This helped Reunion's economy out of the doldrums. But during World War II, an economic blockade once again crippled the island's economy. A colony under French

law must provide to the French mainland goods of greater value than the amount of money allocated to it. A colony had to be profitable. This obligation was lifted in 1946, when Réunion's status changed from colony to overseas department, a change in status intended to provide the island with the benefits of social and political equality with the mainland. The island still falls under the jurisdiction of the French government.

It cannot be said that Catholic faith dominates the island's religious character. It is visible in the shrines along every highway and byway, in caves, on cliff tops and in the many saint's days and holidays. St-Denis shuts down on Sunday, when half the city goes to the beach. Hindus and Muslims follow their respective religions freely and most large towns have both a mosque and a temple. Popular Hindu rites include teemeedee, which involves fire walking, and cavadee, involving piercing one's cheeks with silver needles, often take place. A great deal of syncretism with Catholicism has evolved over the years, and vice versa. Thus a hybrid religion had come into existence. People celebrating all festivals and worshipping all deities have produced a hybrid religion of tolerance. Lot of Hindu Temples is there for Lord Shiva, Lord Muruga and Godess Kaali.

French is the official language, but Créole is the most widely spoken. Few people speak English. Réunion Créole is even beyond most French people. A word, which means one thing in French, can mean something completely different in Créole. But the island which has around 4 lakh Tamils who own Tamil names and celebrate Hindu festivals, yet unable to speak Tamil. The Tamil Nadu Finance Minister Navalar Nedunchezian participated in a world Tamil Cultural Movements conference in neighbouring Mauritius and visited Reunion too. During this visit the Reunion Tamil Kazhagam seeking the help of Tamil Nadu Government to teach Tamil to the people of Reunion and to promote cultural exchanges with mainland Tamils put up demands. It remains still and unfulfilled

dream. People in a distant place do not haunt our memory as we have other chores to attend in everyday life. But the Government of Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry must open Cultural Exchange Centres in all these isolate islands, and like the Alliance Francaise that keeps teaching French throughout world, institutionalized teaching of Tamil and spreading the tenets of Tamil Culture must be undertaken, all who visit islands like Reunion will have these thoughts linger in their minds.

The Maha Bhadrakaliaaman Temple authorities and the Natha Musical Academy of Reunion have invited the students of TamilNadu Government Music College to provide them some insights into Tamil folk arts. Professor M.Anbarasan who teaches folk arts in the College of Music who heads the team comprising his students Miss K.Kala, Miss.K.Vijayalaxmi, Miss.N.Selvarani, Miss.Santhi and Mr.Nallusamy will be participating in various functions in Reunion as depicted in this poster. These ambassadors of Tamil culture carry forward the message of goodwill from the people of Tamil Nadu, and whole Reunion Tamils must be reassured that in upholding Tamil customs, religious practices, arts, music and language, a day will come that Reunion cultural ambassadors arrive here and capture our attention and can win our admiration. Where there is a will, there will be a way, goes the saying. Reunion Tamils have the will. Let them cherish their hybrid culture with Tamil component; we all hope and wish so.

[Courtesy: New Indian Express dated: 13th April 2004]

Pleasant Blending of Painting and Dancing

N.Nandhivarman

A French girl driven by burning desire to gain proficiency in Tamil Dance came all the way from France to the erstwhile French colony of Pondicherry. Her quest did not end in disappointment when she found a choreographer to teach her the nuances of dance with perfection. Pondicherry Tamil Sangam, the cultural hub in the town one evening was stunned to listen a French girl speak in Tamil with her own accent and dance her way to their heart. The girl stood on a pot and performed the “Kuda koothu”, a dance form that is spoken in Tamil epic Silapathigaram. These dance forms were in vogue much before the time of Tamil epic Silapathikaram. The mythology says that a King Vanan, who got infuriated by the love affair between his daughter and the son of Love God Manmathan also known as Kaman, put him in a prison. Perhaps there was no POTA in those days may be POLA (Prevention of Love Act) existed.

To secure the release of Aniruthan, the son of Kaman, Lord Vishnu performed various peculiar dances known as “Vinotha Koothu” to distract the attention of the prison guard. The author of “Pancha Marabu” Arivanar and Saint Thirumangai Azhvar in Nalayira Thivya Prabantham mention about Kuda koothu. This type of dance is nowadays called Karagattam. The folk dancers also call it Paanai Karagam in Tamil. In Andhra Pradesh this is called as Karagalu and Pooja-kunitha whereas in Karnataka its own version of pot dance is called as Puttakunitha. In Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Sikkim they have pot dances with different names in different regions. French girl Benedict Doe stayed in Murugan’s house and learnt this dance in short duration. Murugan also teaches freely at the Tamil Sangam premises to students and had many stage performances to his credit all over India.

Those who had seen the late matinee idol M.G.Ramachandran and Padmini's dance sequence in film "Mannathimannan" will remember how difficult it is to draw some painting by calculated and measured footwork while performing dancing. Painting in Tamil is known as Chithiram and hence this dance form is known as Chithira natyam. The 16 th century book written by Gangai Muthu Nattuvanar called Natanathi Vathiya Ranjanam narrates how this dance form emanated.

At Thiruvalangadu a dance competition between Lord Shiva and Goddess Kaali took place and in that competition Lord Shiva performed Chithira Natyam. Lord Shiva had created 108 thandavas, i.e. dance variations to suit each and every occasion and in that 12 forms are unique. One of them is called "Uruthuba Thandava." and that thandava is Chithira Natyam.

In Epic Silapathigaram's chapter Arangetru Kaathai this dance is mentioned as Chithira Karnam. Panchamarabu speaks about Vinodha Koothu and one of its types is Chithira Natyam. Chithira Natyam has many varieties named after the pictures drawn by footwork. In Radhabandam a dancer draws Temple Car, an Elephant in Gajabandham, a snake in Nagabandam, Eagle in Garuda Bandam, Elephant in Karikolam, Peacock in Mayurabandam, Lion in Simmabandam etc and these dances derived their names by the pictures drawn by the footwork of the danseuse. During 17 th century the Tanjore King Sagasi Maharaj in collaboration with a Poet Bharatha Kasinathan created a number of varieties of dances under the common title Vichithira Natiyam, that is peculiar dances. Thiagaraja Vinodha Chithra Prabandam and Sabdam Ennum Thala Sorkattu published by Thanjai Saraswathi Mahal speak about this dance under title Vichithra Natya Marabu.

These dances were performed in court of the Emperor's of Chola dynasty . They spread a Rathina Kambalam, floor mattress of silk and put soft and wet sand over it.

While the dancers dance their foot impression will create the picture they want to present to our eyes. Murugan's students nowadays spread a sponge pad of 10 x 15 feet and pour ink over it. Then they cover it with a white cloth. While dance is performed the impression emerges. His disciple and impressive dancer Miss. L.R.Krishnamithra is also teaching dances freely at Tamil Sangam Pondicherry. She performs with ease these Chithira Natyam and dances on the top of a clay pot, on the top of a 2 glass tumblers etc, winning numerable fans.

Through dance Murugan spreads his message of National integration and resolve against terrorism. The songs composed for the dances choreographed by him, and translated into English and Hindi are woven together in one dance titled National Procession to Abolish Terrorism and it is performed in 3 languages at the same time in succession. "We have forgotten our mother of United India after independence; in this occasion we have to gather to pray to Her to drive terrorism" so ends his appeal. But this traditional dance forms are adapted to inculcate apt messages of our times which is a laudable exercise. Reviving dances spoken in our epics and blending of dancing and painting in unique fashion highlights the greatness of the Tamil's past which is relived in present by numerous young dancers getting trained continuously as a stream by the Tamil Sangam under Murugan's and Krishnamithra's guidance. Miss Krishnamithra is a dancer who has lot of talent which had to reach the world stage. If that happens not only she will be famous, the world will know about the greatness of Tamil dances.

[Courtesy:New Indian Express: 21st August 2004]

Towards World Records:

An Artist's Aspiration

N.Nandhivarman

The status of artists in various societies through ages needs a comparative study. Plutarch said that “ no generous youth, from seeing the Zeus at Olympia or the Hera at Argos longs to be Phidias or Polyclitus, for it does not of necessity follow that if the work delights you with grace, the one who wrought it is worthy of esteem”. It was the story in Greece. Those days of the quotable quote have become bygone days with widespread public art galleries coming up to place the artist in high pedestal. The Art Gallery in Louvre in 1793 and the National art Gallery in London in 1824 placed the artists for public approval by display of their masterpieces. Napoleon III organized Salon des Refuses during 1863 in which artists thronged to exhibit their works together till 1886. Without government patronage artists wanted to assert themselves, hence in 1884 the first Salon des Independents came into existence these initial steps elevated the status of artists in public esteem. “Peters Principle” a book oft read by Late Murasoli Maran enunciates the golden rule for self-improvement. It prescribes that on attaining one-step ahead; an artist must always aim for higher levels of achievements. And in Pondicherry we have one painter who practices this golden rule.

“A mysterious map for each

An uncharted ocean for every man

With unmarked lands to reach

Body was made a temporary boat

For active mind to ride

To sail and drift from place to place

And an illusory soul to hide

Life chases distant dreams” wrote B.V.Selvaraj I.A.S, Secretary Education of Government of Pondicherry. Keeping in tune with this poetic description a painter Pondicherry is trying to sail in an uncharted ocean. His active mind chases the dreams to secure a place in the Guinness Book of World Records. He is Rama.Mathiazhagan, who is a Lecturer in Visual Communication Design at the Department of Fine arts in the Bharathiar Palkalaikoodam. “La Giaconda” is a famous painting by Leonardo da vinci but unless we say Mona Lisa, no one will easily understand what it is. Similarly among painters of Pondicherry if we mention the one who paints “Thalai Keezhaga” in yogic posture all know the master performer.

In order to blend painting with yogic practice Rama. Mathiazhagan started his earnest attempt in 1999. “In the year 1999, I designed a mask that would hold a marker pen. So when I positioned in the yogic posture of viruchigasana I could draw portraits with the marker pen”says Rama.Mathiazhagan. Then he completed 3 paintings in the year 1999. Light, Jesus and Landscape were the themes of these paintings.

In 2000 Lord Ganesha, An Astrologer, Sarvodaya Leader Acharya Vino Bhawe and 23 such pictures were completed giving impetus to his skills. On 26 th December 2000 in the august presence of Chief Minister N.Rangasamy he conducted an Art Exhibition displaying his skills before an astonished audience. This led to his exhibition catching in TV Screens.

Having found a novel way to paint Rama Mathiazhagan sought to secure a place in the Guinness Book of World Records. Since his method of painting is a novel one the Guinness authorities had given him a Claim ID 25573 and a Membership Number 25017.

“Categories in the book are not made up to suit an individual proposal but rather evolve as a result of international competition in a field, which naturally accommodates superlatives of the sort that we are interested in” explains Scott Christie of the Records

Research Archives of Guinness World Records in his reply date 8 th July 2002 to Rama.Mathiazhagan.

Portraits and landscapes apart from national personalities like Periyar EVR, Mahakavi Bharathiar, and Vallalar are among the hundreds of pictures drawn by Rama Mathiazhagan in the Padma viruchigasana posture.

Chief Minister of Pondicherry N.Rangasamy who inaugurated his exhibition appreciated his talent and like him all Pondicherrians are looking for the day when one of its talented men find a place in World records.

Sir Peter Paul Rubens “ The Massacre of the Innocents” is the most expensive painting which was sold for a record price of \$ 76,695.702 at Sothby’s London on July 10 of 2003.

We hope one day our accomplished artist will also produce a painting that beats this record.

To place their names in world record every painter must aspire, and in such ambition he not only improves his self, but also earns name and fame for his motherland too.

Courtesy: New Indian Express

FRENCH CITIZENS OF PONDICHERRY AND THEIR RIGHTS

N.Nandhivarman

French drafted men for their army from colonies, and these soldiers have sacrificed their lives fighting for France in the World War I and II. Large sections that completed their services in French army comprise the main component of French citizens in Pondicherry. There are more than 20 million French citizens living abroad in various former French colonies including Pondicherry. It will be interesting to note that in the post-colonial period too France maintains links with these citizens in a unique fashion giving them representation.

One hundred and fifty five delegates are elected by direct universal suffrage by the French communities abroad for a period of 6 years and this body is presided by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of France. French citizens in America elect 32 delegates and from Africa 47 seats thus representatives from the total of “A series of constituencies” is 79. In “B series” there are 76 seats and the break up is 52 seats from Europe and from Asia-Oceania and from the Orient 24. Within these 24 seats two are chosen from Pondicherry. Half of the Electoral College is renewed every 3rd year. All former colonies are divided into 52 electoral districts, with one or more delegates per district. A country may have several electoral districts, just as an electoral district may cover several countries.

Apart from Indian elections, the regular exercise in Pondicherry is the elections to choose 2 representatives to the “Assembly of French People Living Abroad” known as CSFE (Conseil Supérieur des Francaise de l'Etranger). It is recently renamed as AFE from 9th August 2004, published in Official Gazette of 11 August 2004 by the Government of France. Lieutenant-Colonel Mouhamad Moustafa and Mr. Ejilane Souprayen were elected on 18 June 2000

for a 6 year-term for the Pondicherry constituency comprising all segments of the Union Territory of Pondicherry. The next elections will be held in 2006. It is interesting to note that both these representatives have served in the French army.

French people residing abroad through their 155 representatives elect twelve Senators to French Parliament. They get elected one-third at a time for 8 years in 2004 and for 7 years in 2007 and for 6 years from 2010. Currently the political party UMP (Union pour un mouvement populaire, which means Union for Popular Government) has 9 members thus elected. They are Mrs. Paulette Brisepierre, Mr. Jean-Pierre Cantegrit, Mr. Christian Cointat, Mr. Robert-Denis Del Picchia, Mr. Hubert Durand-Chastel, Mr. Louis Duvernois, Mr. André Ferrand, Mr. Michel Guerry, and Mr. Xavier de Villepin.

Parti Socialiste has 2 Senators; Mrs Monique Cerisier Ben Guiga and Mr. Guy Penne. The party CRC (Communiste, Républicain et Citoyen) has one Senator Mr. Pierre Biarnes. Twelve personalities appointed by the French Minister of Foreign Affairs for six-year terms "by reason of their competence in matters concerning the general interests of France abroad". They are renewed one-half at a time every three years.

The Constitution of 27 October 1946 (IVth Republic) stipulated that the new Parliament would comprise a National Assembly and a "Council of the Republic" (as the Senate was called until 1958) within which "the French of the Exterior" would be represented. This may be like our lower and upper houses in Parliament. The National Assembly pondered and decided how to effect this representation. It decreed, in a resolution dated 13 December 1946, that three "Councillor of the Republic" seats (out of 320) would go to personalities representing Non Resident French citizens living in Europe, America and Asia-Oceania-Orient respectively.

Subsequently then Prime Minister, Robert Schuman, and his Foreign Minister, Georges Bidault signed a

Decree setting up the High Council for French People residing abroad. On 7 July 1948 the first High Council was composed of 55 members and 8 ex officio members. The first CSFE elections of 1950 were held in seventy countries of Europe, America, Asia and Oceania, according to a protocol defined in a Ministerial Decree dated 10 December 1949 and signed by Robert Schuman.

Article 24 of the Constitution of 25 September 1958 states, "French nationals settled outside France shall be represented in the Senate." Two Executive Orders were issued, on 15 November 1958 and 4 February 1959 respectively, for organizing this representation and providing the CSFE with new status. The CSFE, while retaining its advisory role, became the sole Electoral College for electing Senators from abroad.

Their numbers increased from three to six, two representing Europe and America, one representing Asia-Oceania and three representing Africa. It was thus divided into three sections for the Senatorial elections of 23 April 1959. The CSFE had 84 elected members but it became clear that Europe and America were under-represented in comparison with Africa. The number of Senators was therefore brought up to nine for 1962 elections.

After the creation of the Democratic Association of French Citizens Abroad (Association Démocratique des Français à l'Etranger - ADFE) in 1980, the CSFE was reconstituted in 1982. The Act of 7 June 1982 paved way for the election by universal suffrage of Delegates to the CSFE, which (with the exception of twenty-one members chosen for their competence but not having Senatorial voting rights) was no longer a body of appointed personalities. And the election of twelve Senators thereafter is only by the elected members of the CSFE.

The AFE is entrusted by law with the task of advising the Cabinet. The Minister of Foreign Affairs defines the objectives and priorities of the assembly chaired by

him. The Senators place before the Senate, the National Assembly and the Economic and Social Council the propositions, motions, resolutions and wishes expressed by their electors. The twelve Senators, ex officio members of the AFE, can introduce Bills or legislative amendments reflecting the hopes and needs of French people living around the world.

By this unique system the ties between French citizens living in Pondicherry and their chosen country France remains fostered conferring rights to its citizens and providing them a voice in the democratic set up.

[Courtesy: New Indian Express dated: 19th March 2005]

THE GREATEST BARD OF TAMIL BHARATHIAR

N.Nandhivarman

The 83 rd anniversary of Mahakavi Subramania Bharathiar falls on September 11 of 2004. The Bharathiar Memorial Museum was set up by the Government of Pondicherry in 1972. In 1984 it was converted into a research center to which from all over the world people have come. The Government of Pondicherry headed by then Chief Minister D.Ramachandiran had brought out a beautiful book in French in 1982, which contains translations of Bharathiar's poems, prose and English articles. Such laudable exercises must be continued by successive governments to foster French and Tamil cultural exchanges by translating literatures belonging to both languages. But during his lifetime Bharathiar had struggled to bring out his works in print.

The ordeals of Poets in the colonial era to see their masterpieces in print could be easily understood by a letter through which Mahakavi Bharathiar sought financial support from his well wishers. In an open appeal written in 1921, the Great Bard of Tamil Renaissance states, "All of my manuscripts, accumulated labour of my 12 year exile have arrived here from Pondicherry. They are to be divided into 40 separate books. Most of my works which I have selected for publication are prose, stories, sensational at the same time classical, very easy, lucid, clear, luminous and all but too popular in style and diction and at the same time chaste, pure, correct, epic and time defying." By this appeal the Poet not only exudes confidence in his creative literature and its contents but also is convinced that he is standing at the cross roads of critical times and is destined to play a crucial role. His words further down in the same appeal will be enough to portray the missionary zeal that burnt in him. "The historic necessity of my works for the uplift of the Tamil Land which again is a sheer necessity of the inevitable, imminent and heaven-ordained revival

of the East”, says Mahakavi. These words firmly reflect the inner feelings of the most enlightened Tamil mind of our times, which was destined to leave an everlasting impact on the Tamil society.

Stands Apart

The Poet’s vision was clear and he pursued his life’s mission with all his inherent strength, doing what was destined to be done. He wrote a satirical story “ The Fox with a Golden Tail”, which was published in 1914. It should also be mentioned that Aurobindo Ghosh lauded the flowery language of Bharathiar in that story. Dr.Nanjunda Rao of Chennai who was immensely pleased ordered for 500 copies and many letters of appreciation poured in from all quarters. Kuvalai Kannan read those letters to Bharathiar hoping he would be pleased. But Bharathiar stated as follows: “Using my brain to its fullest capacity while I write in my mother tongue Panchali Sabadam, you alone read it, whereas if it is in English our men who are slaves to English colonial culture order for copies after copies”, the poet retorted with contempt records R.A.Padmanabhan in Chitra Bharathi, a compilations of pictures and historical notes on Bharathiar.

Tamil Medium

At that point of time when all men of letters under colonial rule were crazy over the proficiency in the tongue of the ruling classes, Bharathiar stands apart as a champion of the Tamil cause. In his book Essays and Other Prose Fragments published in 1937 writing under the title “Vernaculars” Bharathiar extends support to the Tamil medium of instruction in the schools of Education.

Let me reproduce his views in verbatim: “ I do not blame the Madras Council of Indian education for their anxiety to have Professor Geddes’ views on the subject of employing Indian languages as media of instruction in Indian schools. For I am aware those men’s thoughts are ordinarily molded by their environments.

Nor do I blame the good and learned Professor Geddes for his innocent comparison of the revival of Indian languages with the Gaelic revival in Wales and in Ireland. I do not know if Gaelic has any extensive and living literature. But I feel it is high time to remind all parties concerned, in the discussions like this, that most of the Indian languages have great, historic and living literatures.

Of course their luster has been slightly dimmed by economic conditions during these later days. The English educated minority in this country can be pardoned for being frightfully ignorant of the higher phases of our national literatures, but they will well do to drop that annoying attitude of patronage and condescension when writing and talking about our languages. The Tamil language for instance has a living philosophical and poetical literature that is far grander, to my mind, than that of the vernacular of England. For the matter of that, I do not think that any modern vernacular of Europe can boast of works like Kural of Valluvar..." so goes on the Great Bard.

This quality and courage of conviction is rare among the educated of his times and even today the ignorance of the educated towards the grandeur of the Tamil language and their wild goose chase of the foreign language continues unabated even after the wise counsel by Bharathiar.

The themes

His book Essays and Prose Fragments contains the following topics 1) To the being of the Universe 2) The Service of God 3) The Siddha and the Superman 4) Immortality 5) Fatalism 6) The Dawn 7) Rasa- The Keyword of Indian Culture 8) Blunting the Imagination 9) The Crime of Caste 10) The Place of Women 11) Women's Freedom 12) Love and Marriage 13) Patriotism and Religious Differences 14) The National Congress 15) New Birth 16) Matri Puja 17) India and the World 18) In Memoriam 19) The Coming Age 20) Reflections 21) Some Political Maxims 22) Free Speech

23) India and war 24) Nammalvar 25) Andal 26) Rights and Duties 27) Vernaculars 28) The occult element in Tamil speech. The list of the essays will reveal the subjects that were near and dear to his heart.

Feminism

Of particular mention is his voice for the cause of feminism. Speaking about the greatness of womanhood the Poet stands apart with no sign of male chauvinism, a characteristic flaw that causes even today gender bias and female infanticide. Let me quote him “ But if woman has always been the civiliser and, therefore, the spiritual superior of man, why did she get enslaved at all? For it is not only among Indians but also among the European and the Chinese and the Japanese and the Hottentots as, indeed all brutes and birds and insects, that the female has been content, till now, to occupy an enslaved, or if you please, a subordinate place to the male.” There cannot be a champion of the cause of feminism than Mahakavi Bharathiar in that point of time in the history of Tamils. A forerunner for the cause of feminism he had left his imprint by way of many articles and poems.

Crusader against Caste

Bharathi describes caste as a crime against humanity and let us know his feelings well expressed in his own style “You sometimes quote ethnology, eugenics, hydrostatics and what not, to support these four thousand castes! But, alas, the ignorant masses of our country have been made to believe that this caste chaos is a special divine gift to our country and whoever transgresses it has to go to Hell. It is this belief more than anything else that makes people insensible to the injurious results of caste. If you really have your justification in ethnology or hydrostatics, then you have been cheating people during all these centuries by telling them a different story. No science can justify cheating”. The scientific temper, which the poet possesses, is what anyone who cares for fellow beings will want to inculcate in a caste- ridden society.

The Poets are conscience keepers of their culture and the society in which they hail, and in unmistakable terms Bharathiar registers his voice of protest against the caste-infected society.

Spreading his message globally

Bharathiar's Tamil poems translated in many languages have established his greatness beyond an iota of doubt, at the same time very little attention is shown towards his writings in English, and it is high time his scholarly opinion on contemporary issues be understood. The Hindu in its sub-editorial dated 12 th September 1921 records the demise of this great poet thus: "We regret to learn the death of Varakavi Subramanya Bharathi at his residence in Triplicane last night. The deceased was an ardent nationalist, a great thinker, a shining speaker and a powerful writer. He is the author of number of Tamil works including National songs. His recitation of the national songs infused genuine patriotism in the hearts of his listeners. He, like many other patriots of India, was an exile in Pondicherry for some years, because his patriotic speeches did not please the Gods in power. He has for some time past been ailing and by his premature death the country has lost a born poet and a sincere patriot. Swadesamithran too paid tributes in its editorial. But it is a sad fact that only handfuls were present when his body was cremated. Let us learn to respect great men when they are alive and be grateful for the great bards who uphold our culture universally.

THE NAGALAND STRUGGLE:

NAGAS AND DRAVIDIANS

N.Nandhivarman

The Nagaland struggle is based on few beliefs. "The Nagas who inhabit the land of Nagaland are a different race who had been occupying their land from time immemorial. Beginning from 1832 until 1947 a small portion of Naga country was conquered by the British and was ruled by their administration. As far as its relationship with its neighbor India is concerned, prior to 1947, no Indian king or prince had ever set foot on Naga country. Also prior to 1947 Nagas had no affinity with India whether racially, historically, politically, culturally, religiously or any other wise. Therefore Nagaland is not part of Indian Territory neither Nagas are Indians' writes Kaka.D.Iralu in the book Nagaland and India: The Blood and Tears, distributed secretly to Indian Members of Parliament in 2000.

"Prior to 1947 Indian subcontinent was a group of over 560 princely states ruled by various Maharajas or Kings. When the Maharaja or King of such state fell the whole state became a conquered territory. For that matter Maratha Empire or any other princely states could be considered as legitimate Indian Territory after 1947 not just because they voluntarily conceded to be a party to the Indian Republic of 1947. The same is not applicable to Nagaland and Naga territories because in first place Nagaland was never conquered by the British as a state, neither did Nagas agree to join the Indian or Burmese Unions of 1947" argues Kaka .D.Iralu.

Quoting from Phizo's letter to then Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi dated May 10 of 1986 further adds "Jawaharlal Nehru understood this fact clearly. On August 19, 1946 in connection with proposed British colony of Coupland he described the Naga territories as the tribal areas defined as being long frontiers of India, which are neither part of India nor

Burma nor of Indian states nor of any foreign power” The British on the eve of their departure from India toyed with the idea of setting up a crown colony comprising all the eastern peoples of the North Eastern region who were neither Burmese or Indian.

The Coupland plan would have created a crown colony with an area of 1,50,000 square miles comprising agas, Karens, Kachins, Shans, Chins, Mons, and even Mizos, Khasis and Assamese people. Such was the ground reality in Naga areas whereas India had to face 562 princely states.

The then Foreign Secretary of India K.P.S. Menon described the situation of India on the pre-independence years “When the British left India, the unity of even divided India was in danger. Some 560 princely states had been left in the air. It was open to them to adhere to India, to accede to Pakistan or to remain independent.... It almost looked as if India was going to be Balkanized. But this danger was averted by the firm handling of the Princes by the man of Iron, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. “

Close on the heels of British Prime Minister Atlee’s policy announcement of February 20 1947, about Her Majesty’s Government decision to withdraw from India by June 1948, The Times of London wrote “ Muslim separatism is deriving encouragement from the language of the White Paper. The Princes too drew similar encouragement. Under the inspiration of the Political department, they began thinking in terms of Third Dominion, which Churchill called Princestan. The Chamber of Princes moved in that direction. The Nawab of Bhopal, who was the Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes, asked the Princes of the chamber to adopt wait and see policy and not to join Indian Constituent assembly.”

Sir Conrad Corfield, the Secretary of the Political Department seemed to be toying with the India of using the Princes as Third Force. The Third Dominion dream suffered the setback with British Government

denial of states membership in the Commonwealth. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel got a shot in his arm when the Prime Minister of Bikaner K.M.Panikkar conveying on March 10 th the Bikaner Maharaja's decisions to participate without delay in the proceedings of the Indian Constituent Assembly. The banner of revolt unfurled by Travancore particularly by its Diwan Sir C.P.Ramasamy Iyer on May 9 th of 1947 claimed that on the lapse of paramountcy on August 15 simultaneously with transfer of power to India, Travancore would declare herself a free and independent state. Sardar Patel took up the matter directly with the Maharaja of Travancore and in commanding voice threatened as to who is putting roadblocks, which made the Maharaja declare his decision to accede to India.

It is irony of fate that the Indian Union in sixties faced with the ever growing mass acceptance of separate Dravida Nadu demand continuing even after so many years of freedom from British on the plank of North neglecting South, in order to ban the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, the political party headed by Aringnar Anna, constituted a National Integration Committee to collect views of people under the Chairmanship of Sir C.P.Ramasamy Iyer, who once unfurled the banner of revolt against Indian Union. The Malaimani, DMK's weekly collected signatures with blood, and more than 50,000 signatures were sent to Sir.C.P.Ramasamy Committee on National Integration. This single incidence proves how certain chameleons change fast their colors and enjoy the fruits in every form of governance.

To illustrate the case how many princely states fell for Indian Union, let us take the example of Bastar, now a district in Madhya Pradesh of India. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel chanced to come across an official file. It narrated how Bastar, whose Raja was a minor and weakling and the Prime Minister a foreigner was mortgaged to Hyderabad state for long lease. Patel called the King of Bastar, and he observed "I saw the

ruler. How young and inexperienced he was. I felt it was a sin to make him sign such an agreement. It was then that I was made fully conscious of the extent to which our interests were being prejudiced in every way by the mechanizations of the Political Department, and came to the conclusion that sooner we rid of these people, the better. Their main aim was to further their own interests and to cause as much damage to India as possible. I came to the conclusion that the best course was to drive out the foreigners even at the cost of partition of the country. It was also then that I felt that there was only one way to take the country safe and strong, and that was unification of India.”

It is a great achievement, particularly of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, who took less than two and half years for the integration of princely states in Indian Union. The Indian bureaucracy did not match him can be proven by citing one example of their failure to resolve a thorny issue between Bangladesh and Indian Union, in spite of the euphoria over India aiding the creation of Bangladesh. “The rulers of Kooch Bihar and Rangpur within the Old Bengal Presidency lost their territories to each other playing the gambling by cards. There are till date 111 Indian enclaves in Bangladesh and 51 Bangladesh enclaves within India, as a result of this gamble by 2 princely states.’

Yet no one had the moral courage of Sardar Patel to resolve even this issue which every government keeps in cold storage. The border dispute and Kashmir dispute, why even the Nagaland issue evades a settlement, and we are not supposed to blame anyone in our democracy.

The emergence of every nation has its own stories which had not seen the light of history. Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru in page 224 of his book *The Glimpses of World History* narrates the story of China integrating into a nation.

:” The administration of Mongol empire must have been a very difficult task. It is not surprising therefore

that it began to split. Kublai Khan died in 1292. After him there was no great Khan. The Empire divided up into big areas. The Empire of China included Mongolia, Manchuria and Tibet. This empire was the principled one under Kublai Khan's descendent of the Yuan dynasty.

To the far west of Russia, Poland and Hungary was the Empire of the Golden Horde as the Mongols were then called.

In Persia and Mesopotamia and part of Central Asia there was a great Turkey as it was called, the Empire of Zagatai.

Between the Mongolia and Golden Horde there was the Siberian Empire of the Mongols.

Mongol Empire was split up each of these five divisions it was a mighty empire."

This is the story of Mongol empire, its later day disintegration and again unification as China in the age of nationalism. The Indian sub continent was ruled by Tamils, their Empires disintegrated, deluge and other natural calamities struck at the Tamil land. Later in British period on their eve of departure there were 11 Presidencies and 562 princely states, which when the winds of nationalism blew over Indian sub constituent were welded together as Indian Union under a Constitution of India. The problems left over by colonialism, be it border dispute with China or Kashmir still bleeds India. In that problem galore falls Nagaland.

To the readers, the statement Tamils ruled India would at the outset appear a tall and false claim. If I could present facts quoting the Father of Indian Constitution Dr.B.R.Ambedkar such doubts will be laid to rest. It would also establish the Tamil as mother tongue of Nagas, who are Dravidians. Let us look at the conclusions Dr.B.R.Ambedkar had reached in his scientific enquiry.

“It is thus clear that the Nagas and Dravidians are one and the same people. Even with much proof, people may not be found ready to accept this thesis. The chief difficulty in the way of accepting it lies in the designation of the people of South India by the name Dravidian. It is natural for them to ask why the term Dravidian has come to be restricted to the people of South India if they are really Nagas. Critics are bound to ask: If the Dravidians and Nagas are the same people, why the name Nagas not used to designate people of South India also. This is no doubt a puzzle. But it is a puzzle which is not beyond solution. It can be solved if certain facts are borne in mind. The first thing to be borne in mind is the situation regarding language. Today the language of Southern India differs from that of the people of North India.”

“The second thing to be borne into mind is that the word Dravida is not an original word. It is the Sanskritized form of the word Tamil. The original word Tamil when imported into Sanskrit became Damita and later on Damila became Dravida. The word Dravida is the name of the language of the people and does not denote the race of the people.

The third thing to remember is that Tamil or Dravida was not merely the language of South India but before the Aryans came it was the language of the whole of India and was spoken from Kashmir to Kanyakumari. In fact it was the language of the Nagas throughout India.

The next thing to note is the contact between Aryan and the Nagas and the effect it produced on Nagas and their language. Strange as it may appear the effect of this contact on the Nagas of North India was quite different from the effect it produced on the Nagas of South India. The Nagas in North India gave up Tamil which was their mother tongue and adopted Sanskrit in its place. The Nagas in South India retained Tamil as their mother tongue and did not adopt the Sanskrit language of the Aryans.

If this difference is borne in mind it will help to explain why the name Dravida came to be applied only for the people of South India. The necessity for the application of the name Dravida to the Nagas of North India had ceased because they had ceased to speak the Dravida Language. The special application of the use of the word Dravida for the people of South India must not therefore obscure the fact that the Nagas and Dravidas are one and the same people. They are only two different names for the same people. Nagas was a racial or cultural name and Dravida was their linguistic name” concluded Dr.B.R.Ambedkar.

Dr.B.R.Ambedkar had tried to explain these questions “We often come across four names Dravidians, Dasas, Nagas and Aryans. What do these names indicate? These questions have never been considered. Are these names Aryans, Dravidians, Dasas, and Nagas the names of different races or are they merely different names for a people of same race?

“The general assumption is that they are different names. It is an assumption on which theories like that of Mr. Rice, which seek to explain the social structure of the Hindu Society, particularly its class basis, are built. Before such a theory is accepted it is necessary to examine its foundations. Starting with the Aryans it is beyond dispute that they were not a single homogeneous people. They were divided into two sections is beyond dispute. One of them may be called Rig Vedic Aryans and the other Atharva Vedic Aryans. Their cultural cleavage appears to be complete. The Rig Vedic Aryans believed in Yajna. The Atharva Vedic Aryans believed the Magis. Their mythologies were different, The Rig Vedic Aryans believed in Deluge and the creation of their race from Manu. The Atharva Vedic Aryans did not believe in Deluge but believed in the creation of their race from Brahma or Prajapathi. Their literary developments also lay along different paths. The Rig Vedic Aryans produced Brahmanas, Sutras and Aranyakas.

The Atarvavedic Aryans produced the Upanishads. Their cultural conflict was not so great that the Rig Vedic Aryans would not for long time admit the sanctity of the Atharvaveda nor of the Upanishads and when they did recognize it did they call it Vedanta. Vedanta which contrary to the current meaning of the word namely essence of Vedanta originally meant something outside the boundary of Vedas and therefore, not as sacred as the Vedas. Whether these two sections of Aryans were two different races we do not know. We do not know whether the word Aryan is indicative of race. Historians therefore made a mistake in proceeding on the assumption that the Aryans were a separate race.”

“A greater mistake lies in differentiating the Dasas from the Nagas. The Dasas are same as Nagas. Dasas is merely another name for Nagas. It is not difficult to understand how the Nagas came to be called Dasas in Vedic literature. Dasa is Sanskritized form of the Indo-Iranian word Dahaka. Dahaka was the name of the King of the Nagas.

{The detailed inputs with regards to this are in the Paper presented by Miss Karunakara Gupta to the Third Session of Indian History Congress -1939 titled Nagas and Naga Cult in Ancient Indian History.}

“Consequently the Aryans called the Nagas after the name of their king Dahaka, which in Sanskrit form became Dasa a generic name applied to all the Nagas”, says Dr.B.R.Ambedkar in his book The Untouchables.

Having arrived to the scene where Nagas are also known as Dasa, we are wondering whether the names Bharathidasan, Kannadasan, Ramadasan, Vanidasan etc wherever the surname was used as Dasa has more inner meaning than what could be read at the outset. My grandfather is Ramadas, then I can also claim of being a Dasa. I am also a Naga. My father’s name is Nagarattinam and if I could use his initial in Tamizh my name had to be spelt as Naga. Nandhivarman. My sister’s name is Dr.Naga.Sengamala Thayar. Such

similarities apart we have plenty of places within India called Nagapattinam, Nagore, and Nagpur and so on proving the all India spread of Nagas.

Let us first finish the detailed analysis of the Father of Indian Constitution Dr.B.R.Ambedkar before dealing many such similarities.

“Who were the Nagas? Undoubtedly they were Non_Aryans. A careful study of Vedic literature reveals a spirit of conflict, of a dualism, and a race for superiority between two distinct types of culture and thought. In the Rig-Veda, we are first introduced to the Snake God in the form of Ahi Vitra, the enemy of the Aryan God Indra. Naga, the name under which the snake-god was to become so famous in later days, does not appear in early Vedic literature. Even when it does for the first time in Sathapatha Brahmana [XI.2, 7, 12] it is not clear whether a great snake or a great elephant is meant. But this does not conceal the nature of Ati Vitra, since he is described always in Rig-Veda as the serpent who lay around or hidden in waters, and is holding a full control over the waters of heaven and earthlike.”

“It is also evident from the hymns that refer to Ati Vitra, that he received no worship from the Aryan tribes and was only regarded as an evil spirit of considerable power who must be fought down.” So goes on Dr.Ambedkar.

It is becoming evident that Snake cult as seen in the snake around the neck of Lord Shiva or in the snake bed floating in the ocean of milk where Lord Vishnu is holidaying, is not an Aryan element but a Non-Aryan element. In every temple near the trees, people worship the Snake God. Since to segregate these worship forms from the worship forms of Aryans is highly laborious and impossible job, Periyar E,V.Ramasamy wanted to throw all gods and goddesses into the dustbin of past.

Dr.B.R.Ambedkar's narration of Naga history follows: “The mention of Naga in Rig-Veda shows that the

Nagas were ancient people. It must also be remembered that the Nagas in no way an aboriginal or uncivilized people. History shows very close intermarriage between the Naga people and Royal families of India. The Devanagari record of Kadamba King Krishnavarman connects the beginning of the Kadambakula with Nagas. The Royakota grant of 9 th century A.D mentions the marriage of Asvathama with a Nagi and the foundation of the Pallava line by Skandasishya, the issue of this marriage.

Virakurcha, who according to another Pallava inscription dated in the 9 th century A.D was the ruler of the dynasty, is also mentioned in the same inscription as having married a Nagi and obtained from her the insignia of royalty. The marriage of Gautamiputra, the son of the Vakataka King Pravarsena with the daughter of Bharasiva King Bhava Naga, is a historical fact. So is the marriage of Chandragupta II with Princess Kuvera Naga of Naga kula. A Tamil poet asserts that Kokkili, an early Chozha king had married a Naga princess. Rajendra Chozha is also credited to have won by his radiant beauty the hand of the noble daughter of Naga race.

The Navasahasanka Charita describes the marriage of the Paramara king Sindhuraja, who seems to have reigned towards the early part of the 10 th century A.D, with Naga princess Sasiprabha, with such exhaustive details in so matter of fact manner as to make us almost feel certain that there must have been some historical basis for this assertion. From the Harsha inscription of V.S.1030-973 A.D we know that Guvaka I, who is the sixth king in the genealogy upwards from Vighraharaja Chahamana and thus might be supposed to have been ruling towards the middle of 9 th century was famous as hero in the assemblies of the Nagas and other princes. Santikara of the Bhaumn dynasty of Orissa, one of whose dates was most probably 921 A.D is mentioned in an inscription of his son as having married Thirubuvana Mahadevi of the Naga family. Not only did Naga people occupy a high

cultural level but history shows that they ruled a good part of India. That Maharashtra is the home of Nagas goes without saying. Its people and its kings were Nagas.”

This and more evidences produced by the scholarly presentation of Dr.B.R.Ambedkar will run into pages and make this paper into a book

Mr.Dikshithar in his paper South India in Ramayana says “The Nagas, another tribe in semi divine character with their totems as serpent spread throughout India from Takshasila in the North West to Assam in the North East and to Ceylon and South India in the South. At one time they must have been powerful. Contemporaneous with the Yakwas or perhaps subsequent to their fall as political entity, the Nagas rose to prominence in South India. Not only parts of Ceylon but ancient Malabar were the territories occupied by the Nagas..... In The Tamizh classics of early centuries after Christ, we hear frequent references to Naganadu..... Remnants of Naga worship still lingering in Malabar and the temple in Nagercoil in South Travancore is dedicated to Naga worship even today. All that can be said about them is that they were a sea faring tribe. Their womenfolk were renowned for their beauty. Apparently Nagas had become merged with the Cheras who rose to power and prominence at the commencement of Christian era.

Mr.C.F.Oldham in The Sun and Serpent states:

“The Dravidian people have been divided from ancient times into Cheras, Cholas and Pandyas. Chera or Sera [in old Tamizh sarai] is the Dravidian equivalent for Naga. Cheramandala, Nagadwipa or the Naga country. This seems to point distinctly to the Asura origin of the Dravidians of South. But in addition to this there still exists, widely spread over the Ganges valley, a people who call themselves Cherus or Seoris, who claim descent from serpent gods. The Cherus are of very ancient race, they are believed to have once held a great portion of the valley of Ganges, which as we have

already seen, was occupied in very early times by Naga tribes. The Cherus appear to have been gradually ousted from their lands, during the troubled times of the Mohammedan invasions, and they are now poor and almost landless. There can be little doubt that these people are kinsmen of the Dravidian Cheras.

The Cherus have several peculiar customs and amongst them one which seems to connect them with the Lichhavis, as well as with the Newars of Nepal. This is the election of a raja for every five or six houses, and his investiture, in due form, with the tilak or royal frontal mark. Both Lichavis and Newars had many customs in common with the Dravidians of the South. Each venerated the serpent. Karkota Naga being to Nepal what Nila Naga was to Kashmir. A Naga too, was the tutelary deity of Vaishali, the Lichchavi capital. The martial relations of Newars and Lichavis closely resembled those of Tamil people and go far to show a common origin.

Property amongst Newars descended in the female line, as it once did amongst the Arattas, Bahikas or Takhas of the Punjab, whose sister's sons, and not their own, were their heirs. This is still a Dravidian custom. In short, a recent Dravidian writer Mr. Balakrishna Nayar says that his people appear to be in nearly every particular, the kinsfolk of the Newars. Besides all this, however, there are other links connecting the Naga people of the South with those of the North of India. In an inscription discovered by Colonel Toad at Kanswah near the river Chambal, a Raja, Called Salindra of the race of Sarya, a tribe renowned amongst the tribes of the mighty is said to be the ruler of Takhya. This was evidently the Takhya kingdom of the Punjab which was visited by Hiou-en-tsiang. It seems Naga people of Takhya were known also by the name Sarya. Again in the outer Himalayas between Sutlej and Beas valleys, is a tract of country called Sara or Seoraj. In this district the Naga demigods are the chief deities worshipped. There is another Seoraj in the upper

Chinab valley, and this is too occupied by a Naga worshipping people.

The name Saraj or Seoraj appears to be same as the Sarya of Colonel Tod's inscription and as Seori, which is the alternative name of the Cherus of the Ganges valley. It seems to be identical with Sarai, which we have already seen, is the old name for the Chera or Naga. Apparently therefore the Saryas or Takhya, the Saraj people of the Sutlej valley, the Seoris or Cherus of the valley of Ganges, and the Cheras, Seras or Keralas of Southern India, are but different branches of the same Naga worshipping people.

It may be noted that in some Himalayan dialects, Kira or Kiri means serpent. This name from which was perhaps derived the term Kirate so often applied to the people of Himalayas. is found in Rajatarangani, where it is applied to a people in or near Kashmir. The Kiras are mentioned by Viraha Mihira in the copper plate published by Professor Keilhorn.

An inscription at the Baijnath Temple in the Kangra Valley gives Kiragrams as the then name of the place. This in local dialect would mean the village of serpents. The Naga is still a popular deity at Baijnath and throughout the neighboring country. The term Kira is thus an equivalent for Naga and it can be scarcely doubted that serpent worshipping Kiras of the Himalaya were closely related to the Dravidian Kera, Cheras, or Kerals of South. Similarity of name is not always to be trusted, but here we have something more. These people, whose designation is thus apparently the same, are all of solar race, they are all venerating the hooded serpent, and they all worship, as ancestors, the Naga demigods.

From the foregoing it would seem tolerably certain that the Dravidian of Southern India were of the same stock as the Nagas or Asuras of the North."

So far we had dealt extensively quoting lengthy passages from Dr.B.R.Ambedkar and from the

sources he relied upon to arrive at a new fact. It is been a difficult task to match the genius who had logically presented his views arguing like an effective lawyer of history. Hence instead of quoting few lines, the necessity arose to quote pages.

Dr.B.R.Ambedkar is a genius who had dealt in depth about the racial question that dominates Indian history, society and political space. In his collected works Volume 7 Ambedkar wrote about the Shudra history quoting extensively from Vedic texts.

He says “The Aryan race theory is so absurd that it ought to have been dead long ago. But far from being dead the theory has a considerable hold upon the people. There are two explanations which account for this phenomenon. The first explanation is to be found in the support which this theory receives from the Brahmin scholars. This is very strange phenomenon. As Hindus, they should ordinarily show a dislike for the Aryan theory with its express avowal of the superiority of the European races over the Asiatic races. But the Brahmin scholar has not only no such aversion but he most willingly hails it. The reasons are obvious. The Brahmin believes in the two nation theory. He claims to be the representative of the Aryan race and he regards the rest of Hindus as descendents of non-Aryans. The theory helps him to establish his kinship with the European races and share their arrogance and superiority. He likes particularly that part of the theory which makes the Aryan an invader and a conqueror of non-Aryan races. For it helps him to maintain and justify his over lordship over the non-Brahmins.” [Page 80 Dr.Babasaheb Ambedkar Writings and Speeches published by Education Department of Government of Maharashtra in 1990]

It has become imperative to deal the Aryan theory first before we arrive at the Dravidian or Naga racial theories. The new light shed by Dr.Ambedkar will be of immense help to understand the racial question and

the subsequent racial conflict that dominates Indian minds for some centuries.

“The second explanation why the Aryan race theory is not dead is because of the general insistence by European scholars that the word varna means color and acceptance of the view by a majority of Brahmin scholars. Indeed this is the mainstay of the Aryan theory. There is no doubt that as long as this interpretation of the varna continues to be accepted, the Aryan theory will continue to live “wrote Ambedkar on 10 th October 1946.

That is in Indian context. Till date more particularly in Tamilnadu the mindset had not changed even in times when scientists debate whether there is a genetic basis for race. Scientists say it is nothing more than political prejudice, and let us examine the ground reality.

“The genetic basis of race and the superiority of one of them over the other died a sudden death during the 1936 Aryan Supremacy Olympics in Berlin. That was when Jesse Owens, a black United States athlete, exploded in the track and field events. He won four gold medals and broke number of world records simultaneously. Hitler refused to shake hands with him and instead stormed out of the stadium in disgust at the star’s triumph over his much hyped Nordic Caucasian team. This reopened the most disastrous chapter of the modern 20 th century eugenic movement. It also led to the renewed politicization of race. It was subsequently used by the Nazis in the thirties and forties to justify genocide. It was the rationale for the holocaust and whole sale extermination of Jews, gypsies and other so called disease carrying low IQ, morally bankrupt ethnic groups solely on the basis of fundamental genetic inequality. There was never and still is not a single shred of evidence for dividing a species from one ancient African mitochondrial DNA into superior or inferior races” wrote The Times of India, leading English daily in its Mumbai edition’s editorial dated 1st November 2004.

The color prejudice myth must have to be exposed. Professor Ripley in his book *Races of Europe* [page 466] asserts that earliest Europeans were of dark complexion. "We are strengthened in this assumption that the earliest Europeans were not only long headed but also dark complexioned, by various points of enquiry thus far. Judged therefore either in the light of general principles or of local details, it would seem as if the earliest race in Europe must have been very dark. "

It is a matter of concern how color prejudice created castes in India though nowhere in the world such a cruel system of suppression exists, that too with religious sanction. The word religion itself is derived from Latin word *religare*, which meant bundle of beliefs. Among the bundle of such beliefs, the caste prejudice inculcated in Indian minds is mental slavery that rules the roost till date.

Dr.B.R.Ambedkar says " Turning to the Vedas for any indication whether the Aryans had any color prejudice, in Rig Veda i.117.8 there is a reference to Ashvins having brought about the marriage between Shyavya and Rushati. Shyavya is black and Rushati is fair.

In Rig Veda i.117.5 there is a prayer addressed to Ashvins for having saved Vandana who is spoken as of golden color. I Rig Veda ii.3.9 there is a prayer by an Aryan invoking the Devas to bless him with a son with certain virtues but of [pishanga] tawny [reddish brown] complexion.

These incidents, Ambedkar say shows that the Vedic Aryans had no color prejudice. How could they have? The Vedic Aryans were not of one color. Their complexion varied, some were of copper complexion, some white and some black. Rama, the son of Dasaratha has been described as Shyama i.e. dark in complexion, so is Krishna the descendent of Yadus, another Arya clan. The Rishi Dirghatamas who is the author of many mantras in Rig Veda must have been dark in complexion. Kanva is an Aryan rishi of great

repute. But according to the description given in Rig Veda x.31.11 he was of dark color.

“To take up the meaning of the word Varna, and to see in what sense it is used in Rig-Veda, Ambedkar does a word count of all hymns of Rig-Veda. The word Varna is used in Rig Veda in 22 places. Of these in about 17 places the word is used in reference to deities such as Ushas, Agni, Soma etc, and means luster, features or color. Being used in connection with deities, it would be unsafe to use them for ascertaining what meaning the word Varna had in Rigveda when applied to human beings. There are four and at the most five places in the Rig-Veda where the word is used in reference to human beings. Having dealt the word extensively and intensively in Rig-veda Dr.Ambedkar traces the word in Indo-Iranian literature. He says the word Varana or Varena in Zend Avesta used in the sense of faith, religious doctrine, choice or creed or belief.’

This evidence from Zend Avesta, Dr.Ambedkar opines as to the meaning of the word Varna leaves no doubt that it originally meant a class holding to a particular faith and it had nothing to do with color or complexion. Then Dr.Ambedkar summarizes his findings by saying that the Vedas do not know any such race as the Aryan race. He further adds that there is no evidence in the Vedas of any invasion of India by the Aryan race and its having conquered the Dasas and Dasyus supposed to be natives of India. There is no evidence to show the distinction between Aryans, Dasas, and Dasyus was a racial distinction. The Vedas do not support the contention that the Aryans were different in color from the Dasas and Dasyus.

It would need a lengthy argument to say that all humans are one, and all human beings have a common gene called sangene in them. We have to quote extensively from the book Journey of Man by Spencer Wells to prove that first human beings originated in Africa and they are black. Instead we will quote a report in The Hindu; a daily dated December

14 Saturday 2002. There is bad news for those who have notions of racial or intellectual superiority. New genetic evidence collected from across the globe shatters the myths and adds a body of proof to the hypothesis that all people are descended from a single man in Africa, who lived approximately 60,000 years ago. Tune in to National Geographic Channel on TV on Sunday at 9.P.M, and come face to face with evidence gathered by geneticist Spenser Wells and her collaborators including R.M.Pitchaiappan of Madurai Kamaraj University.

The fascinating Journey of Man from Africa to Central Asia, and thereon to Asia, Australia besides separate moves westward to Europe and beyond is all documented in a two hour special. Genetics has a way of mapping biological reality and as Dr.Wells and fellow scientists studied in places as varied as Arctic to the Australian aborigines, they found stunning evidence unraveled by genetic markers. Some of the evidence is found right here at home, as the programme briefly points out.

Piramalai Kallars, who form the majority population in Usilampatti and Thirumangalam near Madurai in Tamilnadu, were studied for health reasons by Professor Pitchaiappan initially, but the genetic evidence was leading to other exciting conclusions, that the Piramalai Kallars had the same unique genetic markers as those found in the African and Australian studies, and markers found in Central Asian people.

Professor Pitchaiappan's findings which were also backed up by similar findings about significant levels of the same gene markers in Yadavas and Saurashtra communities., lead to the postulation of a Cape Comerin route of migration of Man from Africa to Australia. Some evidence also points to markers from Middle Eastern peoples. The study by Piramalai Kallar and other communities which are described by geneticists as sub divided gene pools, points to migratory evidence from genetic markers such as

M130 [50,000 years old] and M20, the latter estimated to be 35,000 years old and derived from the former. The ancestors of the Kallars might have expanded from the Middle East, postulates Professor Pitchaiappan who heads the Department of Immunology. Yet other markers like the M172 [found in Baluchis and also Yadhavas] and M17 [found in Central Asians and also in Saurastrians] fuel the excitement that people essentially moved over thousands of years from one part of the globe to another, where they settled down. Features got differentiated due to isolation of the population and climatic factors. Journey of Man unifies the world, and let genetics do the talking, wrote The Hindu Reporter G.Ananthakrishnan.

The spread of human race from Africa is best illustrated in the web pages of www.bradshawfoundation.com, where they show the chart of the spread with time frame. The fact to be borne in mind is that in spite of prejudice destined to disappear as universal reason, scientific progress and information age enlightening our intellect; it seems to be the contrary in Indian society still clinging to caste prejudices.

Our society had failed to root out prejudices. Immanuel Kant described Enlightenment as man's release from self incurred tutelage. We still live under such mental tutelage accepting Aryan supremacy and our inferiority status in caste hierarchy. It is here the argument of Ambedkar assumes great importance. If the Aryan race theory is buried its counter theory the Dravidian theory too had to go. It would be appropriate here to mention that first Non-Brahmin Movement came into existence. Then it assumed the name of Self Respect Movement before settling for the word Dravidian movement. Dravidian movement is an uprising against the oppressors and their theory of supremacy on earth by birth with religious sanction. Therefore Dravidian movement could be placed among the human emancipation movements all through the human history.

The word India, Hindu and Indus came from the Indus Valley civilization, which is beyond an iota of doubt is Dravidian civilization. Hence usage of Hindu and Hinduvta by the Aryan camp aims to mislead the indigenous people of this sub continent to bring all under the Aryan umbrella, so there will be constant attacks on the weak links or missing links in history to prove the Brahminical religion as Hindu religion, not allowing to retrieve the other elements like Naga worship or Murugan worship to establish they were different but woven into mythologies to create a façade of one religion. When Dr.Subramanian Swamy wrote an article in The Frontline dated July 18-2003 to blast the Dravidian Movement, only two leaders from Dravidian movement wrote a rejoinder, one being then General Secretary of Dravida Kazhagam K.Veeramani and me. Let me quote few paragraphs from what I wrote

“All humans are one and scientific studies have revealed that there exists a common gene in all human beings and that common gene is called sangene. The mapping of human genes for 50 years had thrown more light on the oneness of humanity, as theories of continental drift, especially the map fit theory, had proved beyond an iota of doubt that all continents were held together once and drifted. So to make all brains free from superiority complex and accept that humanity is one and the world is one, science had to unearth mysteries. The common gene in every human being had also proven that the theories of race are culture oriented. While race is disproved both Aryan and Dravidian theories have to die. Perhaps Dr.Swamy wants the Aryan concept too to die and if that were the case, one can welcome to some extent his wishful thinking. The Second World War waged by Hitler propounding the supremacy of the Aryan race, which he demonstrated with the killings of millions of Jews, still reminds us that whoever claims superiority over fellow beings in the name of his race of birth will be taught a befitting lesson by mankind.”

Dr.Ambedkar says that the theory of Aryan race is just an assumption and nothing more. It is based on the philological proposition put forth by Dr.Bopp in his epoch-making book called the Comparative Grammar which appeared in 1835. In this book Dr.Bopp demonstrated that a greater number of languages in Europe and some languages in Asia must be referred to common ancestral speech. The European languages and the Asiatic languages to which Dr.Bopp's proposition applied are called Indo-Germanic. Collectively they have come to be called the Aryan languages because Vedic language refers to Aryans and is also the same family as the Indo Germanic. This assumption is the major premise on which the theory of Aryan race is based “

It will also be appropriate that Robert Caldwell's Comparative Grammar of Dravidian Languages published in 1860 led to the emergence of the word Dravidian race that speaks Dravidian languages. Hence in the light of scientific evidences that prove race is illusionary concept, we have to understand the struggle between Dravidian versus Aryan as struggle between languages. At the moment more than 73 Dravidian languages have been identified and in the quest to find the common language of humanity, within the Nostratic School, there are two strong contenders from Dravidian and Aryan language families.

The grammatical principle laid out in Tholkappiam which dates back to 2872 years to eschew Sanskrit letters and use chaste Tamizh, according to scholars is the day the foundations for Dravidian movement is laid. It began as a fight between Tamizh and Sanskrit, which continued in different forms all through these centuries.

It would be beyond the scope of this paper to discuss Aryanization or Sanskritization of India where other cultural identities got lost, but the script Devanagari used for Hindi demonstrates that Naga script had been

adopted for languages without a script on its own. To clear many a confusion books in Pali language or Prakirutham apart from ancient Tamizh have to be dealt in detail. So we leave it here after proving the Pan-Indian nature of Nagas now reduced to Nagaland, a tiny state in North Eastern part of Indian subcontinent.

The British Interregnum

On the question of British and their connection with Nagas, Kaka D.Iralu says “The Naga people were independent and their country was not subjugated by Ahom kings of the Assam valley, who ruled for 700 years. The Naga Hills never formed part of Assam or India at any time before the advent of the British. Little was known of Nagaland when British obtained suzerainty over the Assam valley by the Treaty of Yandabu. The British first attacked the Naga people in 1839 but the fight went on for fifty years till the Ao Naga country was taken over in 1889. Since then Naga people have remained loyal, friendly and peaceful. In the First World War, thousands of Naga people served in distant France to help the British and Allied cause. In Second World War when the Japanese attempted to invade India through the Naga Hills, it was the cooperation of the Nagas both in intelligence and jungle warfare which enabled the British to halt the invasion at Kohima, thus saving Assam and rest of India from devastations of war. These freedom loving Nagas took with His Majesty’s Government and Government of India to do the just and proper thing to grant them their just demand for setting up an Interim Government of the Naga people.”

The first ever attempt by Naga people rallied under the banner of Naga club at Kohima was to submit a memorandum to Simon Commission on 10 th January 1929. In that memorandum they state “Before the British Government conquered our country in 1879-1880, we were living in a state of intermittent warfare with the Assamese of Assam Valley to the North and

West of our country and the Manipuris to the South. They never conquered us, nor were we subjected to their rule. On the other hand, we were always a terror to these people. Our country within the administered areas consists of more than 8 tribes, quite different from one another with quite different languages which cannot be understood by each other, and there are more tribes outside the administered area which are not known at present. We have no unity among us and it is only the British Government that is holding us together now. Our education at present is poor. The occupation of our country by the British Government being so recent as 1880, we had no chance or opportunity to improve in education and though we can boast of two or three graduates of an Indian University in our country, we have not got one yet who is able to represent all our different tribes or master our languages much less one to represent us in any council or province.

Moreover, our population numbering 10, 2000 is very small in comparison with the population of plain districts in the province, and any representation that may be allotted to us in the council will be negligible and will have no weight whatever. Our language is quite different from those of the plains and we have no social affinities with Hindus or Muslims. We are looked down upon by the one for our beef and other for our pork, and by both for want of education which is not due to any fault of ours. Our country is poor and it does not pay for its administrations. Therefore if it is continued to be placed under the Reformed Scheme we are afraid that new and heavy taxes will have to be imposed on us and when we cannot pay them all our lands will have to be sold and in the long run we shall have no share in the land of our birth and life will not be worth living then. Though our land at present is within British territory, Government have always recognized our private rights in it, but if we are forced to enter the council of majority all these rights may be extinguished by the unsympathetic council, the

majority of whose number is sure to belong to the plain districts.

We also have much to fear the introduction of foreign laws and customs to supersede our own customary laws which we now enjoy. For the above reasons we pray that the British Government will continue to safeguard our rights against all encroachments from other people who are more advanced than us by withdrawing our country from the Reformed Scheme and placing it under its own protection. If the British Government, however, wants to throw us away, we pray that we should not be thrust to the mercy of the people who could never have conquered us by themselves and to whom we were never subjected, but to leave us alone to determine for ourselves as in ancient times.

We claim, not only members of the Naga Club, to represent all those tribes to which we belong- Angamis, Kacha Nagas, Kukis, Semas, Lothas and Rengmas “ This memorandum was signed by Nihu of Angami tribe and 19 others.

Meanwhile Indian Constituent Assembly in 1946 constituted a sub committee for the North Eastern region with Gopinath Bordoloi as Chairman, N.V.Thakar, B.N.Rao [Secretary], Rev.Nicholas Roy, T.Aliba Imti and two co-opted members Pu Khawtinkhuma and Pu Saprawgna. This sub committee met in Shillong and all other members except one signed to join the Indian Union. The President of Naga National Council T.Aliba Imti refused to sign and staged a walk out. This is also a noteworthy historical event in the Naga struggle.

On 19 th February 1947, the Naga National Council passed a resolution in which it stated ‘Anyone who turns his eyes on the map of India will find Assam as the eastern most part of the sub- continent and one of her eastern districts is the present Naga Hills. That district was carved out of arbitrarily for administrative purposes. But the Naga people are spread over a wider

area, and they are to be found in the Naga Hills district proper, the un-administered area between Assam and Burma, in the small native state of Manipur in Assam, in the north Cachar hills and even in contiguous parts of Burma. The area covered by the Naga people will thus extend to some thirty thousand square miles, though the Naga Hills District [administered portion] alone covers an area of 4000 square miles.

A delegation of 9 Naga leaders including A.Z.Phizo met Mahatma Gandhi at Bhanghi colony Delhi on July 19th 1947 “If Mahatma Gandhi had been a living man today there would not have arisen the necessity for the Nagas to take a nation wide Plebiscite on their stand for independence. Mahatma Gandhi considered it was within their lawful right for the Nagas to be independent of India, if desired. Making this statement, the Mahatma expressed his readiness to stake his life in defense of Naga right as well as of India’s honor, for he felt India had no right to make a forcible incorporation of Nagaland within Indian Union”, writes Kaka D.Iralu

“Prior to 1947 the Naga National Council had communicated its wishes both to India and Britain and the world that it would form a sovereign democratic Republic called Nagaland. When India refused to recognize these rights the Naga National Council declared Nyasaland’s independence on 14th August 1947” says Iralu

The interim constitution of Nagaland, who had declared independence from India, was adopted at Wokha on 25th October 1947. A.Z.Phizo was arrested on 19th July 1948 and the letter he wrote from prison demonstrates his patriotism.

The patriotism of Nagas and their freedom loving spirit could be proved by the Naga refusal to accept the Coupland plan aimed at creation of crown colony. The Naga leader Phizo in his letter to then Indian Governor General C.Rajagopalachari, dated 22 November 1948 wrote; “Our immediate problem was to fight a colonial

scheme. It was well known to Indian leaders that British wanted to establish a colony known as North Eastern agency. The best brains of the Nagas were wholeheartedly with the British in the scheme. That was part of their spontaneous loyalty. The British could easily have got 100,000 square miles or more and colonize it, protest or no protest. It was not difficult for them to get even 200,000 square miles because much more than that was in fluid state with the people entirely Pro-British in their attitude. This may appear to be fantastic but a careful study of the area will show the possibility of maintaining two parts.

One is Manngdow-Buthidannj region with Chittakong to be a free port for some time as the British cannot think of a state without an outlet of seaport. Then, the other one is the Moulmein-Tavoy region to the sea where the well known loyal British made Karens predominate with Mons and other hill people. Above Tenesarim division there are Shan and the Shan states, then Chins and Kachins with the Karens who form the best soldiers in Burma and who were loyal to the British. They would choose living in a British colony than in an independent Burma. In upper Burma the portion towards Myitkina region of Hukong-Mogok Valley, then towards Assam through Naga territory including Kabaw Valley with Manipur state [two thirds of the state belong to hill men] then Lushai Hills down to Chittakong Hill tracts of Maungdaw-Buthidannj region to the sea. Further up towards Sadiya there are Abores, Miris and Mishmis and Tirap frontier. All this, if it were made a reality with the full support of the hill people could have become a state of some importance from the very day of its birth without having to worry about internal disturbances from the very inception as people have a brotherly feeling toward one another." This is the letter of A.Z. Phizo who became later President of Naga National Council from 1950-1990. This shows the deep desire of Naga leaders to be independent of either British or Indian rule. The pro-British sympathy or gratitude towards British

stems from the fact that education denied by Vedic Aryans was first time thrown open to tribal people.

The Government of India took many steps to retain Nagaland within Indian Union. The following Pact was in that direction. The Naga problem as viewed from the Government of India's side and its conflict resolution attempts need to be mentioned here. Sir Akbar Hydari, Governor of Assam arrived at a Pact with Naga leaders on June 1947.

Judicial : 'All cases whether civil or criminal arising between Nagas in the Naga Hills will be disposed of by duly constituted Naga courts according to Naga customary law or such law as may be introduced with the consent of duly recognized Naga representative organizations, save that where a sentence of transportation or death has been passed there will be a right of appeal to the Governor.

Executive: The general principle is accepted that what the Naga council is prepared to pay for the Naga Council should control. This principle will equally apply to the work done as well as the staff employed. While the District Officer will be appointed at the discretion of the Governor, sub divisions of the Naga Hills should be administered by a Sub Divisional Council with a full time Executive President paid by the Naga council for all matters falling within their responsibility. In regard to Agriculture- the Naga Council will exercise all the powers now vested with the District Officer. [b] CWD: The Naga Council would take over full control [c] Education and Forest Department: The Naga Council is prepared to pay for all the services and staff.

Legislative : That no laws passed by the provincial or central legislature which would materially affect the terms of this agreement or the religious practices of the Nagas shall have legal force in the Naga Hills without the consent of the Naga Council. In cases of dispute as to whether any law did so affect this agreement the matter would be referred by the Naga Council to the

Governor who would then direct that the law in question should not have legal force in the Naga Hills pending the decision of the Central Government.

Land: The land with all its resources in the Naga Hills should not be alienated to a Non-Naga without the consent of the Naga council.

Taxation: The Naga Council will be responsible for the imposition, collection and expenditure of land revenue and house tax and such other taxes as may be imposed by the Naga Council.

Boundaries : The present administrative divisions should be modified as to bring back into the Naga Hills district all the forests transferred to the Sibsagar and Nowgong Districts in the past and to bring under one unified administrative unit as far as possible all nagas. All the areas so included would be within the scope of the present proposed agreement. No areas should be transferred out of Naga Hills without the consent of Naga Council.

Arms Act: The Deputy Commissioner will act on the advice of the Naga Council in accordance with the provisions of Arms Act.

Regulations: The Chin Hills regulations and the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulations will remain in force.

Period of the Agreement: The Governor of Assam as the Agent of the Government of Indian Union will have special responsibility for a period of 10 years to ensure the due observance of this agreement, at the end of this period the Naga Council will be asked whether they require the above agreement to be extended for a further period or a new agreement regarding the future of the Naga people arrive at.'

Certain clauses were interpreted differently by both sides. Nagas claimed their right to secede after 10 years and India insisting that is not correct interpretation. Finally the agreement was discarded in 1951. In between on 30 th December 1949 the Naga

National Council which was the administrative authority in the Naga Hills excluded area, announced a Sovereign State of Nagaland. July 4 of 1954 the Naga Supreme Court was set up.

January 14th of 1956 the Naga Constitution approved, so goes of the various acts aimed in furtherance of the cause of freedom by the rebel Nagas, while Government exhausted various ideas to keep Nagaland within Indian Union.

Indian Government handed over the responsibility to the Indian Army in 1956. Assam Maintenance of Public Order 1953, Assam Disturbed Areas Act 1955, Armed Forces[Special Powers}regulations 1958, Armed Forces [Assam, Manipur] special Power Ordinance 1958, Nagaland Security regulation 1962 and so many acts, so many battles, so much blood shed, yet Naga problem remains without a logical conclusion and reasonable solution.

Let us take a break here and land in 2008 to know the position of the Nagaland, a truncated state, not the one it was in fifties, having been divided into Assam, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland states within India and Myanmar owning its own share of Nagas land.

President Rule in Nagaland-2008

On January 6th of 2008 Allaying fears that President's Rule might provide free hand to armed forces, Nagaland Governor K Shankaranarayan has said maintenance of law and order would be his top priority." President's Rule means civil rule, not army rule, where the civil administration, police and governor have to run the government efficiently and smoothly," he said in view of some political parties and organizations' assertion that President's Rule meant army rule leading to sufferings of the people. Addressing a security co-ordination meeting at police headquarters yesterday, the governor asked the police

and paramilitary forces to remain alert. Reports the Press Trust of India's news.

Thepfulhouvi Solo, a political commentator in Nagaland Post wrote; 'The President Rule in the State is not something to be proud of as some Politicians may welcome it gloriously; it is not something as evil as some other Politicians may condemn it. If the President Rule is welcome, it is not the Electorates that have brought it; if it is unwelcome it is not the common Citizens that are responsible for it. Whether good or evil; whether one likes it or not, it is our political Representatives that are responsible for the President Rule in Nagaland. It has come about not due to this or that Citizens becoming Unruly or Violent; it came because our political Representatives did not carry on the democratic processes.'

It is regrettable, our political Representatives have not brought honor to Nagas and we are not very proud of them for this. It appears the precious Naga independent differing opinion from fellowman without intention to oppose is getting eroded in today's Naga politics and any differing opinion is construed as opposition to other's self-preservation. It is unfortunate the people and the Media describe Party not in the Government as "Opposition Group" as if everything in them is for Opposition. It is regrettable Nagas cannot differ and get along in good nature with one another without being taken as a foe; Can we differ in opinions but not opponent to one another?

President Rule is a stopgap device, at worst a democratic step: It is not "Army Rule" though the President is the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces. President Rule does not continue for years indefinitely, otherwise a pleasant tendency develops in the 'Servants' to behave like Ministers and behave like the Master of the Feast! President Rule is an interim device modern Democracy has devised to introduce democratic Processes of Government in the State. Fortunately in Nagaland the Assembly Election is just

at the corner and it is hoped nothing extraneous would arise necessitating the continuance of the President Rule beyond the necessary time.

This is the situation of Nagaland today but at same time from the side of insurgents there are certain disturbance developments.

Three separatist rebel groups in India's northeast have launched a fresh initiative in 2007 to activate a pan-Mongoloid grouping it had floated in 1990 for a joint revolutionary struggle in the Indo-Myanmar region..

In 2006 at Thailand rebel leaders from the northeast met secretly to revamp the Indo-Burma Revolutionary Front (IBRF). Kughalo Mulatonu, a top leader of the S.S. Khaplang faction of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN-K) declared to the media. The IBRF was formed on May 22, 1990, by a frontline rebel group in Manipur, the United National Liberation Front (UNLF), along with other insurgent groups operating in the region like the NSCN-K and the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA). The coalition was then aimed at waging a 'united struggle for the independence of Indo-Burma', but failed to act as a cohesive grouping and gradually became defunct.

'Representatives from the NSCN-K, ULFA and the UNLF attended the meeting in Thailand. Other groups like the People's Liberation Army, People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (Prepak) and the Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup (KYKL), all operating in Manipur state, have also expressed their desire to come under the grouping,' Mulatonu said. Asked whether the rebel groups have plans to intensify their insurrection against the government under a common platform, Mulatonu said: 'The idea is not to launch a joint campaign against India or Burma (Myanmar). The idea is to usher in greater unity among the people in the region.'

The NSCN-K leader, however, warned that if India and Myanmar were to push the rebels to the wall with continued military offensives, they would be compelled to strike back with a vengeance. 'If we are not disturbed, we shall work for unity among those living in the region under our new grouping that will be a federal front,' Mulatonu said. The grouping will have a new name. 'We are awaiting opinions from our other likely partners like the PLA, Prepak and KYKL before we formalize the nomenclature and other details of the grouping,' the rebel leader said.

Coalitions among insurgent groups in the northeast have come up from time to time, mainly to act as force multipliers to offset the sustained and coordinated counter-insurgency operations by the security forces. In the mid-90s, the Isak-Muivah faction of the NSCN had taken the initiative to form similar fronts. The idea was aimed at turning its war against the Indian state into a war of the nationalities of the region. To achieve this objective, the NSCN (IM) formed the ULFSS (United Liberation Front of Seven Sisters) in 1993 and SDUFSEHR (Self-Defense United front of the South-East Himalayan Region) in November 1994. These two groupings too do not seem to be active now. [Syed Zarir Hussain]

CONCLUSION:

Among the various proposals put forth to resolve the Naga problem, a fresh idea attracted my attention. By an unknown author in net it says ““Soon after Pakistan came into existence in 1947, irregular armed raiders from Pakistan infiltrated into Kashmir with a view to take control over it by force. In terms of the Indian Independence Act 1947, the then ruler of Jammu and Kashmir signed deed of accession to India. As a result, in law, Jammu and Kashmir became an integral part of India. Thereupon, the Indian government sent its forces and pushed the infiltrators out from the Kashmir valley.

As a gesture of goodwill to the people of Kashmir and confident that they were with India, the Indian leadership ordered cease fire and offered plebiscite, provided Pakistan vacated the territory still in its illegal occupation. Pakistan never vacated it and kept pressing for plebiscite. To press its demand, it has been encouraging infiltration of armed terrorists in Kashmir.

According to India, since Pakistan never vacated the territory in its illegal occupation, the plebiscite has become in fructuous and Kashmir has now become an integral part of India. This dispute has led to three wars between India and Pakistan, and ongoing tension on the line of control. The people of Kashmir are being subjected to violence, terrorism and instability.

Soon after the formation of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the Chinese totalitarian government entered Tibet, then an independent nation of peace loving religious people of ethnic origin different from that of the people of China, and claimed sovereignty over it. Since then, Dalai Lama, the religious leader of Tibet and over hundred thousand people have been living as refugees in India. The Chinese totalitarian government also created a border dispute with India and occupied chunks of India. The people of China, abused by the totalitarian regime, are not supporting these misdeeds of the Chinese totalitarian government. Pakistan has, in gratitude for China's support to it, handed over portions of Kashmir in its illegal occupation to China. The issues of Kashmir and Tibet have thus got intertwined.

The vibrant Naga tribal community of Northeast India has been struggling for its identity. Part of the territory traditionally belonging to it is presently in India and part in Myanmar. It has been demanding unification of the two territories as a Naga identity.

Pakistan, China, Myanmar and India should realize that nationhood means people, not real estate. Every ethnic identity has a right to control its local resources

and decision-making. The people of Kashmir and Tibet have been living in instability and terrorism, many of them in refugee camps in India, for the last half a century. The tribal Nagas are losing their identity, accelerated by the influx of refugees from Bangladesh. A solution honorable to all needs to be evolved urgently.

Autonomy under joint suzerainty

A legitimate resolution for these conflicts can be:

(1) Integrated Kashmir, that is the portion under India and that illegally occupied by Pakistan and a portion given by it to China, may be offered autonomy under the joint suzerainty of India and Pakistan, provided the minority communities votes in its favor, and autonomous Kashmir imbibes true democracy. While exercising its veto, the Hindu and Buddhist minority communities can demand full protection, return of their properties and insist on true local empowerment so that their rights are not subverted. Jammu and Ladhak can choose through referendum to remain with India.

(2) Tibet may be offered autonomy under the joint suzerainty of China and India, and integrated Naga territory autonomy under the joint suzerainty of India and Myanmar provided they too agree to institute true democracy through referendum.

(3) Operationally, joint suzerainty will imply that Kashmir, Tibet and Nagaland cannot have their own military. The nations exercising joint suzerainty over them shall position their military attachés in their capitals to oversee that neither of them nor any third nation violates their territorial integrity.

(4) In true democracy, every local entity is autonomous in local matters while the national government provides security. The above arrangement will be in keeping with the spirit of such true democracy. Since Pakistan has handed over a part of Kashmir to China, the decision for Kashmir and Tibet shall be as a

package. Kashmir, Tibet and Nagaland can then prosper as peace zones between the four nations.

Since India liberated Bangladesh from exploitation by Pakistan, Bangladesh clearly can have no threat from India. After its formation, Bangladesh suffered military rule for long periods. As a result of mismanagement and abuse, over one crore Bangladeshis, both Muslim and Hindu, have illegally migrated into India. Since India was its liberator, Bangladesh may seek India's suzerainty, reduce its military, institute true democracy, and dedicate itself to national reconstruction.

If joint suzerainty over Kashmir and Tibet is adopted, India and Pakistan too can reduce their military, and through true local empowerment, dedicate themselves to national reconstruction.

The global society should support the people of China and Myanmar in their struggle for liberation from their totalitarian regimes and instituting true democracy. Sri Lanka too should resolve its Tamil discord by instituting true democracy in which local entities control local resources and decision-making. This will make South Asia a confederation of self-reliant, peace loving local governments.

These are bold suggestions born in the mind of independent thinkers but it will not give any wisdom to the leaders in power in the three great neighboring countries nor will satiate the struggle groups, and both sides will be sticking to their demands and living in their world of dreams with the resolve not to solve a problem evading a solution after so many decades of blood bath, we can only shed tears for those who lost their lives be it our security forces or the insurgents, DMK, was termed as Tear Drops by Periyar E.V.Ramasamy, hence we shed tears for Nagaland and our Dravidian nagas who had become Mongoloid due to accidents of history.